PEORIA PUBLIC LIBRARY
Writing or marking in this book, even for the correction of typographical errors, is strictly forbidden. Any defacement or mutilation will be charged to the last borrower preceding the discovery

MARCH, 1923 VOLUME LVII, NO. 1

THE BOOKMAN

THE FLAPPER'S WILD OATS

By Elizabeth Breuer

TWO years ago when the younger generation was sweeping the literary seas like a monsoon, the young and brilliant editor of an important magazine was complaining that he had too many women contributors. Women, women everywhere. They charged your office in mobs. They suffocated you with their pink poems about passion. "We want you young men in," he said to one of us. "You fellows have got to swing some of the real stuff into my office."

A few weeks ago I had tea with him. Where in the world are the women of the younger generation?" he asked. "I haven't seen one around the office in a year. Are there any?"

There were a few—Alice and Mary and Constance and Kate—but he turned up his nose. They weren't débutantes. They certainly hadn't flair. They didn't even come near the solid ability of the young Englishwomen.

Then there was the Great Editor who asked me to lunch. "We want the women of the younger generation to come into our magazine. Who's the biggest one under thirty-five?"

I really didn't know.

"Jack Spratt says it's the woman — can't remember her name — who has a story in this month's 'Smart Set'." I later looked up Messrs. Mencken and Nathan's pearl. She looked decidedly synthetic.

It was of a piece with other of my encounters. Magazine chores have placed me in the pleasant position of fisher for talent among the young women folk. It has been a congenial task, for being of a feminist conscious generation my first reaction to the fanfare of trumpets blazing forth the younger generation had been a craning of the neck for the flapper in that procession.

One goes through the list of the young women who have broken into the magazines in the last few years with a feeling of satisfaction that they are present. There is nothing, however, to distinguish their work by rea-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

son of fresh insight or style from the general run of steady, dependable craftsmanship. They are not a group which can be counted as a factor in the æsthetic advance of their country. There is no younger generation of women in the same terms in which we deal with a younger generation among the men. The pattern of today's literary effort is being cut out by the young men, who have established themselves as a unit of actuality. And the young women are fitting themselves into this masculine pattern as best they can. They are conservative even when they are modern. They are traveling in the literary omnibuses, while the young men are grooming themselves to become aggressive pilots of literary aeroplanes.

We have, for instance, no young women of an originality to match that of Mr. Fitzgerald. Does Mr. Fitzgerald introduce a vogue for flappers? There are young women to follow with flapper stories as clever perhaps as his, yet lacking that fitful, fretful spark of genius which marks him as the innovator of the styles they wear so gracefully. Is it sentimental stories that sell? The young women write sentimental stories, none better. Have men experimented with free verse? Women write verse just as free, yet lacking the acid vitality of the creator. In the shabby little groups where preposterous and mighty dreams contort themselves into material shape and later respectability, they are scarce, save as wives and audience.

A few years ago a group of girls founded a magazine which was to be the rallying point for young women writers. The girls who organized it explained they were doing so because they could not gain a really comprehensive hearing in the established magazines, and that the women's magazines did not represent them at all. The magazine was to be the birthplace of a tradition for the women of the younger generation. They were certainly on the right track. What happened?

The magazine lasted for a few issues. In it there was a great deal of adolescent holding forth about dispensing with morality and such. There were pronouncements which were of a social rather than an artistic character. The articles, on commonplace topics, were not well enough formulated to have got by the editorial desk of any woman's magazine. The fiction was for the most part from the hands of mature women and had the aroma of moth balls. You suspected it represented their gesture toward art. It was clumsy with the clumsiness of mediocrity, not the rough edge of genius. The most promising note was the gay spirit in which these girls entered upon their venture. This was no solemn mission, they warned, no cause at whose altar they were going to burn their young lives away.

What might have grown from even so inauspicious a seed one cannot tell, but one of the girls went off to Europe, another married; the magazine passed from hand to hand and finally dwindled and died. One thing sticks in my mind, an article on modern art written by a leading member of the group. She had gone to an exhibition of the Independent Artists. She wanted to know what this modern art was all about anyway. The article itself, in the approved flippant vein, showed that even the artists themselves didn't know what they were doing (as if artists ever were articulate). That was as serious contact as any of these young women had with so significant and revolutionary a manifestation in painting. In that

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

same exhibition there were several pictures by young men who were winning their spurs as writers, but whose interest in all forms of art was intense enough for them to participate as best they could as intelligent amateurs in the field of a kindred art. They recognized that their colleagues were facing the same problems, with the same determination to express today's life in today's manner.

I remember a calling together of the free verse clan by Alfred Kreymborg several years ago. They came — Carlos Williams, Bodenheim, Skip Cannell, Hartpence, Stevens, Walter Arensberg, and Alfred Knopf, then starting out as a publisher. Save myself, in the rôle of a sympathetic newspaper editor, there was no woman present, although presently the women were to contribute to the movement stamped with the minds of these men.

Last year I attended the meeting of a lunch club for young women authors and editors. The pretty associate editor of an advanced weekly (the girls are all comely) made a talk the substance of which was that young women held such low literary rank because of the faulty curricula of the women's colleges they had attended! That such a thesis could be listened to with the credence, respect, and sympathy it was given was alone a mark of our calibre. These girls, a dozen and a half, with those on their outskirts, fairly represented the feminine complement of the younger generation. At no meeting of this club, at none of the tea parties or the more intimate gatherings of young women writers, have I ever heard a discussion of the abstract affairs of art — any art, which has any bearing on what is happening today.

At one tea, given for a departing woman editor, the talk which had been about persons and clothes turned to shop matters. "Girls, when they ask me in London who is the newest genius in America what shall I say?"

There was a long silence.

"I'd say Ben Ames Williams," finally suggested a young woman who stands high among us. No one demurred. Much as I admire Mr. Williams, I am sure even he might question the definiteness of such laurels.

It is only partly the fault of this girl that she is ignorant of what is going on about her. She has understanding, she has more ability than many of the young men about her, but she has lived with nothing more challenging to her creative powers than a college background and current fiction.

The flapper's college courses in general give her nothing more nourishing for a 1922 soul to feed on than Oscar Wilde for hors d'œuvres and Tennyson for roast. She must clothe her ideas in the hoops and bustles of a Victorian day because she knows nothing about modern fashions. Rumors reach her of a world which has long since dispensed with such plumage. But she doesn't know where to get these new garments. Despite her pretense at weary cynicism she graduates from school a confirmed romanticist of the old type, virginal of the knowledge or experience that will vitalize her to creative originality. Contrast her equipment with that of the young man who in his sophomore year is raving about reality, issuing manifestoes, discovering new truths, rediscovering old ones, aflame with wonder at life or a passionate rejection of its terms.

It is not until the college girl has served an apprenticeship in the world outside, through marriage, children, lover, or work, that she reaches a firm and fruitful grounding for her creative roots. She has lost valuable

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

years, and at the age of thirty gained an intellectual assurance that the boy had in his sophomore year. With all her cleverness (and she is apt to be more brilliant than he) the circumstances of her woman's life bring her to a much slower intellectual fruition.

She is taking the short story course at Columbia and talking about O. Henry clichés when he is fighting fierce battles over the French decadents and throwing himself in and out of dadaism and vorticism, pronouncing the Imagists and the Georgians old stuff, declaring for form or against passion in art.

I asked a charming and witty girl why she wrote. "To make money, of course," she answered. "I don't give a darn for art. I really don't know anything about it. But I love to own beautiful clothes, and a nice house, and I want a good nurse for my baby, and it can't be done on what Jimmie makes."

I suspect her tongue was in her cheek, but not very far. She was only saying in other words that she was a woman first and an artist afterward. That, generally speaking, is the true relation of women to art. Men happen to be artists first and men afterward.

By race function we are concerned with primitive hungers which are material and passive in their nature. People sentimentalize over women the world's idealists, and men the hard-headed realists. As a matter of truth, women are the most relentless of practical minded persons. Men are brought to earth only upon imperious occasion, and having time to waste they dawdle it away in scratching pictures on cave walls, in trying to fly like birds, in singing silly songs, or cutting frogs open to see how they work. Men are play boys. In our hearts we know that none of the silly things they do matter, save the food they forage and the shelter they give our young and the vitality they bring us. We are their mothers. We women know that the final mysteries of life are in our possession, the final fruition ours. We are at once the enemy of the artist and his protector. So long as we can patronize him, so long as we can mother him or be the touchstone of his social exchange, we love him. But let him ask for freedom, let him wander off into areas that spell danger to our personal investment in him, and we show our implacable hatred and our lack of real sympathy with the impalpable illusions of fools and dreamers.

We know that in the last analysis a picture is only a piece of canvas daubed with paint, a poem is just a string of ordinary words, and a tune is a tune, no matter what we say with smiling lips at tea parties. At bottom we know that artists are only children crying for the moon, and we women, even to the least of us, are wise in the certitude that it is only the moon, that they cannot reach it anyhow, and it won't do them any real good even if they ever do.

I have heard wives of artists explain pictures they had no possible contact with. I have a young and beautiful friend who was wife to a great writer. At her interesting salons it was she who led the brilliant conversations, it was she who was Apologia Regina for her husband's maligned novels. A few years later she married a scientist. Through the length of a long evening she explained to us in bewildering technical terms and with the aid of convoluted charts the nature of her husband's amazing researches. She was a wonderful woman. She properly achieved this

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

metamorphosis. She just as properly could translate her enthusiasm for her husband into terms of a navy man's preoccupation with building programs or a brewer's concern with prohibition. In all this she remains eternally the wife, and exhibits the chief womanlike quality of fluidity.

Because we are women first and artists afterward our ultimate concern is with men's smiles and babies' shoes. No career comes before this, no matter what we tell men. We are brought up to please men, to be gracious, to speak when we are spoken to. We are anxious not only to preserve existing forms but to mold ourselves to those forms because they maintain our power as women. Artists, on the other hand, are always shying bricks at the structures of civilization. Every artist is at heart an anarchist whose delight is to destroy existing buildings and to rear new ones. Artists are bad social beings, and always manage to put themselves outside the pale. They have nothing to lose, and fame to gain, by their mad practices. We women don't want to thumb our noses at the temples that enshrine us.

Now men's brains are no different from women's. Their souls are no differently formed nor more lofty. The difference lies in their attitude — woman's a clinging, man's a pushing off. It is only the aggressive attitude we lack. Woman's passivity, beginning with her sex functioning, dominates her entire attitude toward experience. Whenever a woman adopts the masculine attitude of aggression she succeeds as well as men. Although negative and positive forces are equally vital to life, the women who have made a dent in the masculine pattern of the arts have always been rakehellers or saints, women who disdained their sex attribute of yielding and waiting. You've got to be a positive force to fight your way up to the top of the particular world you want to own. It's as true about the world of ideas as about the battling ring.

We have all the marks of indirection, of subtlety. Consider some of the inhibitions and repressions that surround the nice girl even in this age of flappers. If she wants to take a walk at night alone, she'd better not — unless she wants the long eye of a policeman or the furtive words of prowling creatures to kill what joy there is in the venture. "Don't go to see that man alone," says the literary adviser to the young writer. "He's soft on women." He probably is, but he is stimulating and courageous and colorful as well. He hasn't bitten the nose off this young man, but the girl's a girl, and so she misses a high moment. "I want to go up the Yangtze River with this exploring expedition", says another girl, "but I'd be the only woman along, and my family is raising hell." She starts off, anyhow, but her outraged aunt catches her at the gangplank. "You mustn't give a man such an expensive painting for a gift," warns the mamma of a third. Trifles? Yes, but real bars to spontaneity, destructive of the brittle delicacy of the spirit, and forcing direct action into submerged channels. Surely sailing up the Rhone didn't get Columbus to America, and why should it be expected of feminine voyagers?

The don't's must give way to the do's if women are to take their place as the equals of men. An artist is a positive, creative force. A person who maintains the status quo is a conserving quantity. Women try to be both, and land on the fence.

If we are to be considered creators

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the arts we must take on an attitude of advance. We must place all — even our womanliness — into the jackpot. An artist pits his dreams against the whole world. Sometimes he wins. In his personal life he almost always loses. A soul is a bitter luxury. Are we young women prepared to pay for one with love, family, with our social well being, if need be? It isn't easy to embrace the artificial reality of art when that reality is opposed to our innermost concepts of happiness, when we realize that the final essence of art is the renunciation of matter and the triumph of that intangible thing, the spirit, the dream.

This seems a rather far cry from a discussion of the lack of flappers of original talents. It is rather the nearest approach and the clearest answer. When young women in their private gatherings by natural inclination wage fierce and foolish and really wise battles about art, about style, about romanticists, classicists, realists; when the views of this or that school are a matter of spiritual integrity to them; when they delight in the magic of particular words and particular moods; when they become connoisseurs in the art of tasting the delicate flavors of this or that rare mind, they will reach an artistic maturity from which they can go a step further and become creators on their own. When they learn how to laugh, with their sides shaking and their cheeks quivering, when they reach a gay and tender and ironic familiarity with their gods, and when by common and imperative inclination the conversation of young women writers among themselves is not who's who and where in the literary world, and what she sold and he said, but rather literary manners, methods, and ideas, we shall begin to give birth to a vital literary tradition among women. Then only can we expect to have gifted young women in groups which will stamp the life of their time with the pattern of their literary or other artistic accomplishment.

I recall a tumultuous table conversation in a garden under the trees of the Champs Elysées. French painters and their wives, with a mixture of Americans. Excitement, verve, enthusiasm. People, presently musicians and waiters, depart. "What was it all about?" asked my friend who couldn't understand French. "Why Delaunay has a notion that by harnessing electricity to paint brushes and working on glass instead of canvas he might do something new in art."

"How silly," said my young woman friend, who was the literary find of that New York season.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE PARODY OUTLINE OF LITERATURE

IV: ROMEO AND JULIET

A Tragedy in One Act and an Epilogue

By Dorothy Speare

With a Sketch by Herb Roth

ACT I

SCENE: *A small anteroom at* MRS. CAPULET'S *ball. A door at back centre opens to the dancing and allows the music to drift in from a comfortable distance. There are a few comfortable chairs and a small table front centre weighed down by a full punch bowl and glasses.* GEORGE CAPULET, *a short, round little man with a nervous pink face, stands by the punch bowl pouring something into it from a reverently held bottle. He pours furtively, quickly, but not quickly enough;* MRS. CAPULET *comes to the door at back centre in time to witness the drowning of the last drops. She also is round and pink, but taller than her husband. She wears a tight cloth of gold gown and a determined expression.*

MRS. C.

George!

MR. C.

(Resignedly) Oh, there you are, my dear. I was just —

MRS. C.

Yes, I can see what you were just— *(Marches into the room)* Of course, if you think we have so much champagne that you can pour it into the punch bowl like soup —

MR. C.

Now Daisy, I do think when we give a gay little thing like a masquerade one bottle is only one bottle. I remember when I used to go to parties and routs, and all those shindigs —

MRS. C.

Oh, of course, it would be different if it were a question of us or our

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

friends! But kitchen sherry is plenty good enough for the young people of today; they can't remember when they have swallowed anything but conjecture.

MR. C.

They won't stop long enough to conjecture over this.

MRS. C.

Well, it will be interesting to see what the mixture you've made will lead to, that's all I can say.

(Shrieks of laughter come from the ball room.)

MRS. C.

If our little party succeeds in keeping the Montagues awake all night the way their last party kept us, it's all I ask.

MR. C.

You and me both, Daisy. Of course *(generously)* I hope Julie has a good time out of it.

MRS. C.

(With feeling) She's having a far better time than a hostess should. I told you how your daughter'd act, and she has!

MR. C.

(Mildly) Sometimes I wish Julie was married, and then another fellow'd have to do the worrying.

MRS. C.

Oh, George, what a relief that would be! But *(with regret)* we can't begin to talk of it, at her age. We have all those awkward years to go through first!

MR. C.

Well, she'd better have a good time tonight and the Montagues had better lie awake and cuss us; it'll be a long enough time before I dig down in my jeans for another such blowout, what with the income tax and Julie's clothes. *(With pride)* I hope you notice how I stood up to her and made her fill in that costume of hers until she had some neck in it.

MRS. C.

(Wearily) Oh, George, you are so childish. She took it out again the minute your back was turned.

MR. C.

She did! She did! *(Goes quickly to L.)* I'm going to see Miss Julie about that! I'm not going to have any daughter of *mine* going around with the filled in part of her neck taken out — etc., etc. *(Exits at L. irately.)*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MRS. C.

(Following) George! Come back here, George, it's too late to do anything now. You can't make a scene *now; George!* etc. *(as she exits).*

(Slight pause.)

(Enter from door at centre, in dominos and masks, RUMMY MONTAGUE *and* MIKE MERCUTIO, *two stags already started along well oiled roads.)*

RUMMY

(Chanting) "There was a young man so benighted
He never knew when he was slighted
He went to a party
And drank just as hearty
As if he'd been really invited!"

Ahoy, the punch bowl!

(They surround the punch bowl.)

MIKE

Say, pipe down a little, old can of pickles. You don't exactly want to be called by name, do you?

RUMMY

Well — it might make things more interesting. Here goes — to the hectic life! *(They drink.)* Anyway, old lady Capulet would be glad to see me. I never saw a hostess *yet* who — Wait! I can rhyme that!

"I never saw a hostess yet
Who wouldn't like to take a bet
On any stag that comes along
And welcome him into her throng."

MIKE

(Abstractedly) This is darn queer-tasting stuff.

RUMMY

I'm sick of this old family feud line anyhow. Being away at college for three years you lose track of things, and when a fellow asked me the other day if I knew Julie Capulet, I swear my brain didn't even register when I said No!

MIKE

I've never gotten this next door stuff straight yet. I can't get the sense of a stew over a boundary line; we've all got 'em, if you'll excuse my axiomatic comments.

RUMMY

Listen, old hole in the wall, and I'll explain in words of one syllable. Family No. 1 — that's us — lives in fairly good place, to start with. New family moves in on adjoining estate. It's natural Family No. 1 should regard new-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

comers as pushing intruders — my folks can't help that point of view. It seems the newcomers get sort of sore at the way they're being overlooked — they don't know that the Montagues intend to get round to call within a year or so — and when they plant a nice little mile long hedge to finish off their estate, they plant it accidentally a foot or so over the border line.

MIKE

How do you know they were sore instead of accidental?

RUMMY

I tell the tale as it was told to me — my Bed Time Story during the most formative years of my life! Then, Ignatz, their loving neighbors requested the soreheads to remove the mile long hedge and put it right back where it belonged. Tear it up, transplant it, take it out — see? Since then, forever after, they ain't speakin'. And it's a large sized bunch of rot.

MIKE

Well if I were you, I would keep just as quiet as possible about being here — both at home and under the enemy's roof.

RUMMY

Being at home is under the enemy's roof just now for me, old fright, since the dear college chucked me. How they "wish I was married and settled!" *(Grimaces)* They don't know I did my best to please 'em, but let's not discuss Rosaline or I'll mope around like a silly owl.

MIKE

I never asked you to mope around about Rosaline. What a name! My word! Sounds like nail enamel! And any girl who's narrowminded enough to hold the fact that a man's too much for his college against him, and dumb enough not to appreciate his attentions, why she's darn narrowminded, that's all I can say, and let her go, say I.

RUMMY

(Sings pensively)

"She is gone, let her go, God bless her,
She is mine wherever she be" —

It's her loss, of course, the poor girl. I explained her lack of good taste to her; that's as far as a gentleman can go. The next move is up to her, distinctly up to her.

MIKE

(Moves over to look out door at back centre) Meanwhile, let me tell you that there are some objects here well worthy to meet the eye.

RUMMY

Can I depend on that?

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The only girl that I ever loved
Has just gone back on me"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MIKE

That Spanish costume —

RUMMY

Oh, go along; don't mind me. A woman is only a woman, but a bowl of punch is a drink!

MIKE

I hate to criticize the good people who didn't invite us to this party, but that bowl of punch is darn queer-tasting stuff. There's the Spaniard again, Rummy — see you later!

(MIKE *plunges from room with a cutting-in attitude.* RUMMY *sighs and sings sadly while ladling out another glass of punch)*

"Oh, some folks say that love is a blessing
It's a blessing I never could see —
For the only girl that I ever loved
Has just gone back on me."

(As he sings, JULIE CAPULET *enters at L. and stands surveying him. She is a small pert looking little maid in her teens, costumed as a powder puff. Her mask is very slight; so is the upper part of her costume. After inspecting* RUMMY *thoroughly, her expression becomes favorable. She assumes an attitude of surprise)* Oh!

RUMMY

(Turns and sees her) Oh! *(A quick silence while he surveys her. Then)* Oh! and likewise, more oh's! How did you happen to blow into this God-forsaken party?

JULIE

You seemed to be enjoying it after your own humble fashion.

RUMMY

Well, I never could realize how awful things might be without you until I saw you, could I? Be logical, my dear!

JULIE

Don't call me "my dear". That's what husbands call their wives when they have family arguments.

RUMMY

I suppose I *was* anticipating things a bit. But if you're sensible, I don't imagine we'll have many family fights.

JULIE

No? I can assure you that you're the first person who ever even supposed that I might be sensible.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RUMMY

Yes? I'm glad to hear it because you've got to be awfully foolish in a few minutes.

JULIE

Oh go and drown yourself in the punch bowl. I never was so bored in my life. If any more saps flirt with me tonight, I shall destroy my fatal beauty by washing off my make up.

RUMMY

You are the most beautiful combination of circumstances I have met in a varied life. And sooner or later, mostly sooner, you've got to be my *wife. (With pardonable pride)* Did you hear that? It's not every day a girl gets a proposal in rhyme!

JULIE

(Yawns) Are you trying to tell me that you fell in love with me at first sight?

RUMMY

Now, don't rush things. You'll get that, too — but don't rush it!

JULIE

The only thing I am trying to rush is your departure from this room. I came here for a moment of rest. I never was so bored in my life.

RUMMY

Oh, so you are tired of all this dancing stuff! That makes the next step easier.

JULIE

What next step, idiot?

RUMMY

Well, things have got to get formal sooner or later, haven't they? Either we are engaged or we aren't, aren't we?

JULIE

We aren't. And before we go any further in this light conversation, might I have a glance at my future husband?

RUMMY

Future hus — Can I *depend* on that?

(RUMMY *snatches off his mask; she removes hers at the same moment. They stare at one another in silence; then* RUMMY *walks up and kisses her.)*

JULIE

(Speaks reflectively) Oh, what's the use of knocking words around? I knew I would like you.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RUMMY

Like! That is hardly the word . . . *(Kisses her again)* Nothing ever happened like this before — that's how I *know!*

JULIE

You're one of those big decisive souls who know things forever in a minute, I suppose.

RUMMY

Listen Powder Puff — something's happened to us. Let's not stop to analyze it — that always spills the beans. My car's outside. I can give you half an hour to assemble your trifles whilst I gather my trousseau together, and then we'll motor over to Greenwich and send wires to our families that their lives have become further complicated. What do you say — will you take the chance?

JULIE

(Deliberates) I suppose it won't be any more of a chance than anything else. And the family are boring me terribly. Just about a little thing like a low neck on a fancy dress costume! I never was so bored in my life — all right, husband — what's my future name, by the way?

RUMMY

Mrs. Rummy Montague. Like it?

JULIE

(Collapses into laughter) Like it? It's the best joke I ever heard!

RUMMY

(Stiffly) I hope our sense of humor is going to jibe.

JULIE

Rummy Montague just expelled from college, and — oh, you don't see, you don't *see! I* am Julie Capulet!

RUMMY

(Pausing slightly) You are! You mean that in an hour you *were!* What a tremendous hit we'll make! *(With growing realization)* So you're Julie Capulet! Look here, I met a Yale man the other day who said he was engaged to you!

JULIE

Listen; are your intentions honorable or do you take back your proposal? I just wanted to know.

RUMMY

Oh come on; there are still enough things I don't know about you to make our honeymoon interesting. Hurry up, let's go!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JULIE

(As she starts to go off) I'd just like to know what our families will do about this!

RUMMY

(Magnificently) Our families? Oh, that will be the best fun of all!

Curtain

EPILOGUE

SCENE: MRS. RUMMY MONTAGUE'S *boudoir, a pretty room done in rose and white.* JULIE, *wearing an extreme evening gown, sits at her dressing table, laying out her complexion. Enter* RUMMY *in evening dress, singing.*

RUMMY

"Oh, some folks say that love is a blessing
It's a blessing I never could see" —

JULIE

That's the only song of yours I agree with, but your voice doesn't agree with me in *any* song.

RUMMY

(In injured tones, sitting down upon a small white chair after he glares disgustedly at it) Oh hang off, Julie; I'm tired. Father brought me home from the Club —

JULIE

Where you've been toiling over cocktails, I gather. If you knew how your drinking bored me! I never was so bored in my life!

RUMMY

(Ignoring her) Say, Julie, I wish we'd had the sense to settle down out of our parents' eyesight. . . . Dad knows to the minute the time we got in every night this week! He's sore — said he thought I'd settled down, that this is worse than college!

JULIE

(Yawns) If you think I don't get it from my end, too — and who was the one, by the way, who thought it'd be such a *cute* idea to have our house built on the boundary line, to join the families more than ever? Yah! Blah!

RUMMY

Well, the families had to do *something* to show the world they didn't care

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and make everybody quit laughing at them, as you'd realize if you ever stopped Blah-ing long enough to think of anything. And it was slightly important that they give us the roof over our heads, my dear. If they hadn't, we'd be holding down a two room flat.

JULIE

Oh, I don't doubt it. I don't doubt that you couldn't make enough money on your own account to keep me in beauty spots. *Once* I had a suitor who could earn money on his own account, but it was a long time ago when I was young.

RUMMY

Permit me to say that I'm slightly weary of hearing about your past suitors. You seem to think the subject enthralls everyone.

JULIE

I only talk about them when I'm so bored with you that I have to divert my mind somehow.

RUMMY

I must bore you all the time then.

JULIE

There's no question mark to that sentence. Just a big, fat period! And do you think you never talk about your pasts? I never am so bored in all my life as when you tell me about Rosaline's naturally curly hair!

RUMMY

I am reminded of it only when the bills come in for your permanents, my dear. (JULIE *adds an extra blob to the already fervent cupid's bow of her mouth.)* If you knew how you bored me with that eternal art work, you'd give your face a rest once in a while.

JULIE

(Viciously dabbing on more) If you knew how you bored me with your eternal nagging over my legitimate precautions against the wear and tear of an evening, you'd give up in despair. If only you had the self-control to shut up once in a while, we might get along at least as well as our mothers and fathers. I don't *ask* for any more than *that.* *(She rises)* Come on; I'm ready. What'll we do, by the way, when our friends quit inviting us to dinner? You'll have to earn some money then!

RUMMY

(In horror) You're not going like *that,* are you?

JULIE

Like what?

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RUMMY

In that thing! There isn't anything to it! I thought it was a negligée!

JULIE

(Sinks down on the chaise longue) My God, this is the last long mile! The same old line that my family haunted me with — the line I thought I would get rid of by marrying you! Perhaps you don't remember that the dress I had on when you proposed to me was lower than this.

RUMMY

(Grimly) I do. That is why I have a prejudice against low necked gowns.

JULIE

You had had too much punch when you proposed to me, but I don't notice that you allow that fact to prejudice you against further drinking.

RUMMY

Oh, Lord! Is all marriage like *this?* There's a lot more to it than the first darn *kiss! (With pride)* Say, did you hear that, Julie? One of my rhymes — "Oh, Lord! Is all marriage like this —"

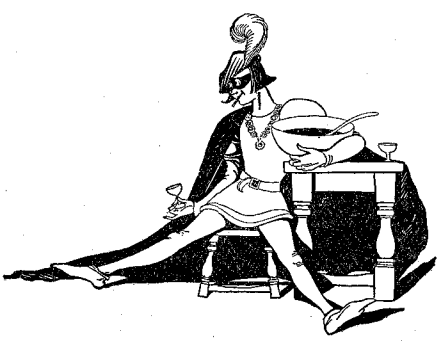
JULIE

(Screams) OH YOUR RHYMES! Rummy Montague, if you bore me any more, I'll take poison — I'll take poison!

RUMMY

(With sudden purpose) Can I depend on that?

Curtain



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE MIDDLEMAN IN SCIENCE LITERATURE *

By Morris Fishbein

THE belief of Mary Austin that a new type of writer will have to be evolved if science is to be interpreted to the public, is based on the conception that scientists cannot write for the public understanding and that the qualities demanded by research make it unlikely "that the kind of scientific writing demanded by Science Service will ever be written by scientists". Her discussion ends with a plea to writers to take up this field as a welcome relief from the demands of the popular magazines. "The test for capacity for this sort of work", says Mrs. Austin, "would be about the same as for successful short story writing, coupled with an intellectual integrity which does not always obtain among fictionists." Does this interesting and timely discussion of an important subject meet the tests laid down by its author? The answer to this searching question must be in the negative, for it can be shown that the greatest of scientists and observers have written in English as pure and undefiled as that of the most expert fictionist; that much of the writing for the public done today by well known scientists meets the demand; and that the real problem is to insure a type of fundamental education for scientists that will enable them to express themselves in understandable language. Fallacious, even ridiculous writing can be the only result of attempts to have the findings of science interpreted to the public by lay writers, who are "capable of immersing themselves in the data of science to the point of saturation". The overhead for the middleman has been enough of an incubus in American business without introducing a new type of middleman into American letters.

The fundamental difficulty with scientific writing is that extraordinary nomenclature described by Sir Quiller-Couch in "The Art of Writing" as "jargon". Jargon is not necessary to scientific thinking; it is equally unnecessary to scientific writing either for scientists or for the public. An eminent neurologist, in a recent number of the "Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry", describes the symptoms found in a patient suffering with a tumor of the brain:

> There was no impairment of any form of sensation, no paresthesia, no loss of sense of position or stereognostic perception. Biceps and triceps reflexes were equal and normal. The right patellar tendon reflex was more prompt and of slightly greater intensity. There was no ankle clonus and no Babinski sign. There was no ataxia in the upper extremities. Diadokokinesis was good in both hands. A suspicion of asynergia was aroused by the right finger to nose test.

Had the last sentence in this quotation read "right thumb to nose test", the description might have been equally satisfactory to the average reader, since the gesture might well have expressed the contempt of the writer for his reader's understanding. No phy-

*An answer to Mrs. Austin's "Science for the Unscientific" (THE BOOKMAN, August, 1922).

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sician except a neurologist of many years' experience could reconstruct mentally a picture of the patient's condition, without considerable difficulty and frequent recourse to the medical dictionaries. Consider, in contrast to this quotation, a description of a patient by James Parkinson, who first described the condition now known as paralysis agitans, sometimes, in honor of its discoverer, called Parkinson's disease, and named by him the "shaking palsy". His article was published in 1817.

> At present he is almost constantly troubled with the agitation, which he describes as generally commencing in a slight degree, and gradually increasing, until it arises to such a height as to shake the room; when, by a sudden and somewhat violent change of posture, he is almost always able to stop it. But very soon afterwards it will commence in some other limb, in a small degree, and gradually increase in violence; but he does not remember the thus checking of it, to have been followed by an injurious effect. . . . He now possessed but little power in giving a required direction to the motions of any part. He was scarcely able to feed himself. He had written hardly intelligibly for the last three years; and at present could not write at all.

Is it necessary to say "A suspicion of asynergia was aroused by the right finger to nose test", or is the same thought better conveyed by "He now possessed but little power in giving a required direction to the motions of any part. He was scarcely able to feed himself"? The intelligent reader can answer the questions correctly.

Examples might be cited endlessly to indicate that men trained in science have been able, in the past, to write satisfactorily for public consumption. The lists of chemists, physicists, physicians, biologists, and bacteriologists who have written classics in various languages, contain the names of many men of common repute. In English, Oliver Wendell Holmes, S. Weir Mitchell, Sir William Osler, Joseph Priestley, and Victor Horsley wrote models of composition. Among the living, Sir Clifford Allbutt, Stephen Paget, Harvey Cushing, Robert T. Morris, and many others annually produce excellent material. At the sessions of the American Medical Association for several years speakers have addressed the public on medical subjects, and while the number of addresses of sufficient quality to merit comment has not been great, now and then some production is so meritorious as to constitute a conspicuous example — a proof that it can be done if enough time and trouble are taken to do it right.

This matter of science for the unscientific is, after all, no new thing. Paracelsus went to the public with many of his explanations, and not all of them were bombast. Many of the arguments and dissertations of the science of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were held before public audiences. Today, or rather for the last ten years, city and state boards of health, and even the United States Public Health Service, have been attempting to educate the public in matters of scientific medicine and of health. That these attempts have not been productive of better results does not necessarily lie with the writers of the material. There was not the public interest in all these matters which was awakened when they took on the character of war measures. There was not the unhealthy sensation seeking curiosity which has developed as a result of the sale of the wrong kind of scientific literature. Today the United States Public Health Service broadcasts health advice by radio and furnishes newspapers throughout the country with an excellent news service; a host of more

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

or less scientifically endowed literary medicos have their effusions syndicated through the daily papers; magazines on scientific subjects for the unscientific reader spring up like weeds overnight. There are a dozen periodicals on health published in this country for the public and there is not a good one in the lot. Those which are not devoted frankly to promulgating the propaganda of some narrow cult or to securing readers by salacious displays of especially, though somewhat disproportionately, developed young women indulging in remarkable exercises, have been established to make favorable advertising mediums for accessory health devices. The charge is somewhat inclusive but I have made a careful survey of the field. The facts indicate that there are numerous writers who can write on scientific subjects for the public; but that they are not primarily interested in conveying accurate knowledge or activated by motives other than the pecuniary one. Here and there some writer of real ability is reaching a very limited public because the proper medium does not exist to provide him with the kind of public he ought to have.

Books on scientific subjects written for the lay reader have kept pace with periodical literature. There has been within the past ten years a veritable avalanche of books for the new mother on the care of the newborn baby. From my own collection of such volumes, and from a general survey of the field, I can say positively that the number of such publications will approximate more than a hundred. Yet of all this list one or two books have had tremendous popularity; the others appear and disappear as rapidly as does the new fiction or the slender volume of some privately printed poet.

Books on psychoanalysis for the public run into many, many volumes. The literary critics applaud those with literary appeal — an appeal usually based on the fact that the author has indulged more in fiction than in fact. Now and then a solid work written in simple, understandable language has appeared, but it has failed for the simple reason that it has told to the public all the truth that the public should know. It has not included many actual case records. Fortunately a few successful volumes like Myerson's "The Nervous Housewife" and Jackson and Salisbury's "Outwitting Our Nerves" have demonstrated that in this field also there are scientists who can write on scientific subjects as well or better than the immersed layman. It would be an unpardonable oversight not to mention also in this connection the work of Stewart Paton, who in "Signs of Sanity" has produced a simple, understandable series of essays — a volume which towers like a lily above a mass of rank vegetation polluting the field of mental literature for the public.

Consider also two other scientific subjects which have been, of late, much in the public thought: vitamins and glands. The magazines have all taken a feverish interest in the matter and all sorts of more or less concentrated extracts and whole substances have been offered in the literary field as well as over the drug counter. Of the books on vitamins those of Sherman and of Harrow were well written, honest accounts of the present status of the subject. It is hard to find intelligent people who have read them. Persons who talk about vitamins have been interested in sensational newspaper and magazine accounts of the remarkable things that vitamins could do in the way of restoring health and beauty; the fault does not lie with

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sherman and with Harrow. Of books on the glands those of Berman and of Harrow have been most widely noted. Mrs. Austin unfortunately considers Berman's book as "an instance of the provincial — and accepted university — approach to writing as a performance". Ah, Mrs. Austin, that is just what it is not! If Mrs. Austin had read the reviews of Berman's book in many lay periodicals she would have discovered that it was hailed with acclaim by our literary critics. Here was a scientific writer who could write! Here was a man who could make science interesting! And then if Mrs. Austin had gone to the scientific periodicals she would have discovered that their reviewers were aghast at the hyperbole and fantastic conceptions of the glands indulged in by Berman. True, Berman might make science interesting, but in this particular work he was concerning himself not with science, but with some ecstatic contemplations of what certain knowledge of the glands might lead to, if only we had the knowledge. It is currently reported that the Berman book had a tremendous sale, and that it even led for a brief period the list of non-fiction best sellers. The book by Dr. Harrow is a well written statement of fact and theory concerning the glands; it will hardly have anywhere near the sales achieved by the Berman book.

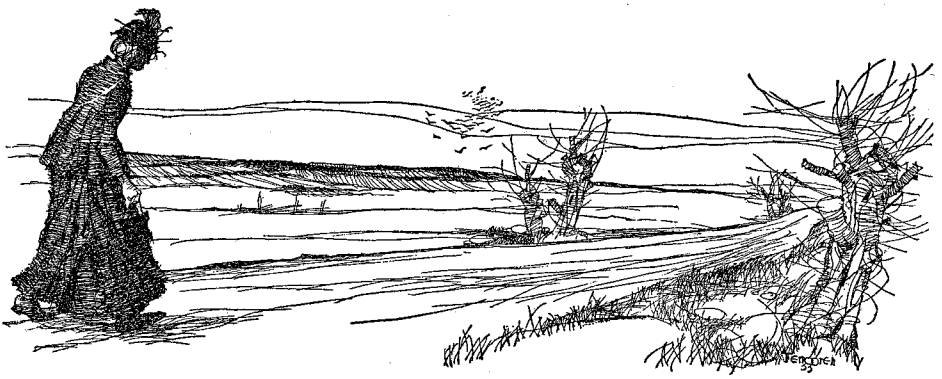
I have been particularly interested in watching the progress and tremendous popularity of the works of Hendrik Van Loon. To me it has seemed that his success is due to the fact that he wrote ostensibly for the attention and the mind of the child of twelve; therefore his writings appeal particularly to the great public. Scientific writing, to meet similar success with the public, will have to adopt a similar method. Mr. Van Loon, when he uses the word "anthropologist" (probably because he simply could not avoid using that word) stops to explain just what an anthropologist is. Dr. Slosson was, Mrs. Austin states — and she should be reminded of it — for years a chemist and a teacher of chemistry, before he undertook to write "Creative Chemistry" for the public. The writers on science for the public will have to be scientists who can write — men like Dr. Slosson — not writers "whose approach is purely literary but who are capable of immersing themselves in the data of science to the point of saturation". The immersion will not make them clean; they are more likely to come up saturated with the débris and ooze at the bottom.

EPITAPH

By Amanda Benjamin Hall

HER beauty was no more than such
As perished when she came to die,
But each eye bore the sense of touch
And every finger tip an eye.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



WHEN THE TIDE RISES

By Henry Goodman

With Sketches by Gustaf Tenggren

THEY watched their mother curiously: Margaret who had just come in from work; James who had already washed up and rid his hands of machine oil; Dick who was in a hurry to have supper over with so he could go to meet his girl. In the minds of all of them there formed the indefinite consciousness that they were witnessing something strange that was growing in the mind of their mother.

One after another they had come into the house, greeting their mother in short, impersonal sounding phrases: "How are you, mother? Supper ready?" This was the sum total of their anxiety for her. Their questions and their immediate preoccupation with their own affairs, even before she could answer them, drove back the speeches that her lips had framed. A whole day she had worked in her home, feeling that with evening there would come release from the silence that bound her. But now as on other days, she could not speak. Their manner, their cold voices directed to her, robbed her of the impulse to make herself one with them by joining in their talk.

Her hair grey streaked and unruly, her eyes keenly alert and somewhat out of keeping with the exhausted face, Mary Winters, mother of this group of young people, worked nervously setting out the dishes while the sounds of her children's talk came to her ears. Her silence was deceptive. If there had been a way of projecting the voices that spoke within her, her children would have been strangely awakened.

There was, however, a new nervousness of movement that kept them all on the watch. One moment it seemed that there was a spiteful move in her arm as she thrust upon the table a platter bearing the thick slices of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bread. Then they sensed a sudden restraint in her movements. But they did not realize that they were witnesses to the development of a secret desire — onlookers upon a revolt that was gathering power.

As she heard their talk of plans for vacation, of invitations to parties and balls, it seemed to her that their voices were transmuted into the inner voices she heard. There was in these voices a familiarity, as if she had known them before. She began gradually to know them as her own and after a time she heard herself taking counsel with herself of many years ago.

Now as she walked about, losing the consciousness that her children were near, she became obedient to the inner consciousness that had grown up as if of itself. She did not stop to trace its development, to follow back to their beginnings the impulses that flooded her with new warmth and thrill. She did not even know that her eyes had taken on a new shining. She felt only that she must hurry through the work of the household; that it would be well also to have her children leave her to herself.

Soon she was enmeshed in a fine net of recollections. Every move she made in the unconscious execution of her household work seemed to unravel more vividly some tender detail which brought its new stab of yearning. Somehow unknown to herself there formed in her mind a loathing for the persons about her. Now that she was held in this feeling it began to grow upon her that she was among strangers, and for a moment she was shocked to find herself at their service.

At this instant she looked up to find the eyes of her children fastened upon her. If she had been less at the command of the impulses sweeping through her she would have repressed the questions she spoke: "Why do you look at me? What are you following me for?"

They turned their eyes away only to meet each other's glances questioning their mother's speech. Each thought, "What is happening to her? What can be the matter?" But they were schooled in a certain attitude of mind which, while not indifference, was unquestioning acceptance of whatever happened.

As for Mrs. Winters, she did not know that what she had said had given rise to any questioning in the minds of her children. The thought was in her mind: "Strangers. Everything is strange. My life, what has happened to it? Once it seemed my own: that was when he and I were in love, when I gave myself to him. Now it seems as if it were never my own, as if it had been taken from me and measured out to me."

It must be said for Mrs. Winters that she did not put her thoughts into words like these. But she felt that what had been youthful in her had been trodden upon by forces which she could not in any way circumvent. She had been powerless before the life that had overtaken her. It had trampled upon her dreams and desires. In her youth she had been capable of revolt, such a revolt, for instance, as was involved in going to live with the man she loved. As a consequence her mother had spurned her and the parish priest, who had looked upon her as of the select, had made her the subject of a blasting sermon on the rampant immorality of the times. But now to one observing her it was apparent that life had been too much for her.

The thought that she was a stranger among strangers grew upon her

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

until there developed the fear that she stood in danger of personal injury at their hands. To protect herself from their aggressions, she took on a strange meekness of bearing. Now she no longer slammed the door behind which she had placed her worn broom, nor in putting away the dishes after the three had eaten did she clatter them with the conscious vehemence of her anger. Now she no longer looked angry but only fearful, fearful that those three whom she served might suddenly recognize her for the stranger she was and turn upon her. Her silence and meekness were the adaptive weapons forced upon her by her growing fears.

Her walk about the house took on the character of that of a caged beast. There was lurking watchfulness in her eyes. She was trapped, and who knew but that her captors might torment her with a new prod? She walked on the balls of her feet, silent and alert. When she heard the words of her son, James, "Oh, it's nothing; she'll be all right in the morning. She's nervous, that's all", she did not know that they referred to her. She knew only the relief that came upon her when the three were gone.

Weakness seized her, a weakness that made her sit down and gaze blankly about her. From her place by the kitchen table she could see into her bedroom. Her eyes rested listlessly on a photograph of herself taken shortly after she had become John Winters's wife. A stranger looking at the picture would have been struck by the vividness and the vitality that spoke in the smiling young woman. There was the abundance of life — it was like a young tree brimming over with sap.

Mrs. Winters, seated, was made painfully aware of the need for flight. Unthinking, because her feelings gave no room for thought and left no power to reason, she rose with the determination that she must go away. In the reawakened flow of her vital self she did not know that it was life that had conquered her, but felt only that her circumstances and surroundings had been the source of her long betrayal. Without thinking it, she knew she must flee this place, this prison and her captors. She went into the bedroom and was stung by a pang of hatred at sight of Margaret's bed near her own. She pulled out her drawer and took from it her shabby purse and some underwear. Then, as the feeling of flight coursed into her veins, she wrapped these things in paper, fastened on her head the shapeless hat she took from a nail, thrust herself into her short, tight jacket, and walking swiftly through the rooms stepped into the hallway and out upon the street.

A keen wind cut through her scanty clothing but tingled her blood into resolute power. On she walked, unthinking, not planning the course she should take. She was tempted to stop before the lighted attractive windows as a measure of indulgence in the sense of freedom that was hers, but she was loath to halt, to waste her joy in this way.

Two women, mother and daughter, passed her in the street. With the same strange satisfaction with which one slave sees another beaten, she looked upon the mother and thought to herself: "A stranger . . . does she live with her children? Is she a stranger to them, too?"

The thought came to her but brought with it little feeling. She looked upon the people who walked beside her with no sense of kinship, knowing herself completely estranged

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from her kind. In the crowd that was moving into the railroad terminal she came suddenly to a resolution. She would leave the city — go back to the town that had sheltered her in her girlhood. There, who knew, she might regain what was now no longer hers — herself.

She looked at the signboards, seeing others do so. She became aware of the scrutiny bestowed on her by the uniformed men at the gates. This made her self-conscious. She grew fearful lest they should question her or in any way hinder her. Finally she went to a window and in a tremulous, hesitant voice, asked whether she could buy a ticket to Smithville. With sudden dismay she found that she had not enough money with which to pay for it. Her money would take her only to Plattsfield. But learning that the distance from Plattsfield was only thirty miles, she decided she could walk to Smithville.

She had no idea what she would do when she got there. She had no hope that anyone would help her or that she could turn to anyone if she were in need. Only the strength of her yearning gave direction to her journey. In this confusion of purpose and in the haze that enwrapped her mind as she looked from the train window upon the darting figures of the prospective passengers, she settled back in her seat with a composure that had nothing of intellect in it. She felt better seated well back in the soft cushions. Her mind was a vessel of seething indefinite impressions in which memories became real and reality lost all sharpness of outline.

Somehow the steady onward progress of the train communicated clarity to her thoughts and soon she began to reflect on her life at home with her children. But no sooner did she take up details of that life and seek to subject them to the closer scrutiny of analysis, than they all formed a tangled maze which held out no definite line of understanding. She could not explain how it was that soon after the children were grown up, life had left her behind. She had once had many friends who had enriched life and had given meaning to it. Now she saw herself completely alone. The maze of detail hid all traces of those changes which had brought her finally to this state.

II

Margaret was the first back that night. She inserted the key into the keyhole and turned the key, but could not understand why the bolt did not shoot open. Then she threw her weight upon the door. It gave and she found herself in the kitchen, the light burning as brightly as when she had left the house. This in itself called her attention; then she saw the open drawer of the bureau and finally her mother's empty bed that had not been slept in.

"Mother out?" she thought wonderingly, and then in answer to the question she rummaged the drawer, urged on by a sharpened intuitive prompting. When she discovered that her mother's shabby purse was gone and that the old hat and the threadbare jacket were not in their places, a quizzical, amusing, and at the same time painful thought came to her mind. "What if mother has run away? Run away?"

Impatiently she went about the house, walking up and down in the silent rooms, waiting for her brothers to return. Somehow that which had seemed amusing at first thought was not now so amusing. On the other hand it was strange that her thoughts

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

should have taken the turn they were now taking. With an ill concealed sense of self-reproach she remembered having answered in thoughtless, unmeaning words the questions concerning her mother's welfare asked by the friends she had visited. In this mood she began to recall the evening, as if seeking by some process of introspection to discover at what time her mother had left the house. There was an uncanny satisfaction in visualizing — she was now helpless to prevent the thoughts from coming — how at the height of her enjoyment that evening, when she was furthest removed from home or the thought of home, her mother had walked silently to the bureau, opened the drawer, and had taken from it the shabby things she had had for so many years; had taken her things off the nails that held them and had walked in silence out of the house.

With the vividness of a new, or an unexpected, thought the idea of her mother's silence came to her. It was like a grey background against which her mother stood suddenly revealed, a woman whom she had not even seen before. She was slightly ashamed of herself and tried unsuccessfully to repress the word "Mother" as she looked at the grey background.

Her thoughts were accelerated and impatience hurried them on. She rushed into the hallway when she heard a step which she recognized as that of James. Her eyes filled with angry tears when she saw his drunken, red face and moist eyes, and as she backed into the room she blurted out loudly, "James, what have you done?" Then to justify her anger, she added, "Mother's gone away."

"It's nothing special. I had a little drink. Eh? Mother? Run away?"

"Here you go and get drunk. James, what'll we do?"

"What's the matter? What are y'so anxious for? You're never so anxious about mother at other times."

"But we must find her. What'll they say? All of us out having a good time and mother all alone here."

The drunken ease of her brother, reminding her of her own thoughtlessness, set fire to all the rage within her. She did not know it, but it was rage directed against her mother, against her brothers, against everybody and everything that could possibly have led to the predicament they were now in — three grown up children who had forced their mother to run away.

They were in a bitter quarrel when Dick came in, pleased with himself, pleased with his girl, and pleased that he had a respectable mother, for his girl's parents had made sure of that before accepting him, formally. To him the announcement of their mother's disappearance came with alarming effect. It threatened to baffle the progress of all his plans and desires. With this realization came the instant determination that she had to be found and brought back. But he saw also the need for silence, a repression of such publicity as might be given to the disappearance of Mrs. Winters if the neighbors were to learn of it. He turned to Margaret.

"Here, now, you! Don't go off that way, bawling to wake the dead. Why didn't you look out for this thing before it happened?"

He was interrupted by James. "And that's exactly what I say. What's the use of carrying on now, when the old lady's away?"

"Oh, you shut up, drunk! You make me tired. Go on and sober up, if you know what's best for you." Dick was plainly resentful, and to suppress his feelings and also to find

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Mother's gone away"

clearness for his thoughts he began walking up and down the length of the room.

Now and again his eyes took in the face and figure of his sister. She was weeping where she sat. Now her mind was filling with anxiety for her mother. Then it dawned upon her in the fulness of its significance that their mother had left them, left them . . . had really run away from her children. She wept bitterly.

Dick was thinking angry thoughts. "A fine crowd, the whole gang of us." He did not spare himself. "The whole bunch of us always thinking of ourselves, running around all the time, having fun, going out and treating her like a dog." But he realized sooner than did Margaret that this was no time for self-reproach.

James, watching them both through red, bleary eyes, saw deeply into their feelings. He felt resentment that they should both find fault with him, and their sharp words rankled. Therefore he was moved to laugh at their anxiety, knowing it for what it was and angry that they should assume a better-than-thou attitude toward him. He

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

followed their movements closely, tracing each facial expression to what he felt certain was the thought behind it, and adding to his store of bitterness with each change that came over their faces.

Dick suddenly asked, "Well, what'll we do?"

"Do?" James's answer was ready. "Why, we'll go over and see the police captain." He knew the storm his words would raise.

"You go and be hanged, that's what you do," Dick said. Margaret dried her eyes and with lips tightening in anger at James, turned to Dick and said, "Let us both go out. She must be in the city somewhere. We'll find her."

Dick turned to James to give him parting instructions. "Look here, not a word to anyone, see?" Then he and Margaret walked out into the street.

Their search was conducted in silence. In her mind Margaret was seeking somehow to find refuge from the self-reproach that was welling up in her. This was of primary importance. The finding of her mother seemed a matter of secondary consideration. It was true they were out looking for her, but there was little anxiety about her. Even to themselves it was apparent that their work of finding her was artificial, superimposed on the other, nearer things that called for their attention.

For instance, Dick was busy thinking of his girl. What if she should find out? What if her mother should find out? These thoughts turned his mind to Margaret, for in her he seemed to find a satisfactory target for the shafts of his anger. "It was her business to look out for mother. She is nearer to her than I am, anyhow."

His thoughts reached their mark, for in the silence Margaret felt herself to blame. This in turn developed resentment in her, and that resentment turned bitterly upon the cause of all her trouble. She felt the need for justifying herself before her brother and, though she hesitated before committing herself to the words, she said, humbly, "I can't think what is the matter with her. She must be losing her mind."

Dick's eyes took on a peculiar light for an instant as he surveyed his sister. Then he repeated, as if to himself, "Must be losing her mind."

Their search that night brought them little satisfaction. They had been all over town, but of course had not gone to the police, fearing that issuing a general alarm would be the only action the police would take. However, they were somewhat encouraged by the statement of a railroad porter that a little old woman answering their description had passed him on her way to a train. They had spoken to the station master, who had communicated with a dispatcher, and now they would have to wait.

Their days were full of anxiety lest the neighbors discover what their mother had done. Fortunately for Dick his girl had never displayed any too great love for the woman who was to be her mother-in-law, and so by diplomatic silence he headed off any possible talk which would lead to extensive inquiries regarding his mother. However, the necessity for being thus diplomatic had disastrous results on his amiability at home. There his real feelings found free outlet. He made public these feelings with the enunciation that his mother was a "muddling old fool". Instantly Margaret flared up. Her feelings for her mother were not of the kindest. In fact, placed on the anxious seat as

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

she was, her thoughts about her mother had been anything but flattering. But to hear Dick speak out this way was more than she would stand.

"You have no right to say that," she exclaimed. "No, it's wrong of us to be sitting here and talking this way about her. Who knows where she may be right now?"

"That's what we want to find out, ninny," said James, with ill repressed impatience. "What are you talking about anyhow? She's a fool running off this way, without letting you know what she is up to. If she don't like the place and doesn't like us, she can quit any day. We can stand it, if she can. But that's no way. Getting out and queering us before everyone."

"And what are you talking about, I should like to know?" Dick said pointedly to James. "You'd better just keep shut."

The air was charged with combat. Everyone was querulous, ready to condemn everyone else for voicing any view on the matter that was of annoyance to all.

It was with a curious feeling that they received the news that their mother had been found by the mail carrier lying in the road to Smithville, mumbling incoherently, and insistent that she must go on to that town.

Their feelings were of shame, of pity, but mostly of relief; relief that now there was no longer a roaming danger that threatened momentarily to expose them to the eyes of their world. Now she was found they would take her back into the house, and in a strange manner each resolved, in silence, that she would not ever get away again. That was all. They would see to it that she would stay safe at home.

The question as to who would go for their mother was easily decided. Dick, of course, realized that he could not go. For if he should go to fetch his mother, he would have to tell his girl all about it, and that was the last thing that he wanted to do. Therefore it was up to Margaret and James. Margaret would not let James go alone, for he had shown himself strangely unable to take his mother's going seriously, that is, seriously from their point of view. In fact, when Margaret and Dick thought of James it was with anger that he failed to realize the menace threatened in the possible discovery by others of their mother's recalcitrance. And then, neither would Dick have Margaret go unaccompanied, for he had somehow awakened to a sense of anxiety concerning her welfare.

So Margaret went with James as her escort.

When they had settled in their seats, James chuckled at the thought of their mission: children going after their mother, to bring back a runaway mother. In all his experience he had never heard of anything quite so funny. He laughed and thus sealed Margaret's lips — after looking severely into his smiling eyes and muttering, "Idiot", she shut herself in the fortress of silence which sheltered her against him.

III

A cold dawn, misty and cheerless, hung over the hills about the station where they alighted. Margaret made her way to the side of the uniformed station master, a tall, bearded man. James came up and heard the station master's answer:

"Wa'al, she don't seem nohow cheerful. She's kinda 'fraid like someone's after 'er. I tuk 'er over to my house, so she couldn't git away."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"We can't thank you enough for what you've done," said Margaret with an intense, emotional tone of voice that almost moved her to feel what it implied. But James smiled cynically.

Together they followed the station master. They were mounting the steps leading to the porch when they both beheld the face of their mother. It was instantly withdrawn from the window, but they had seen enough to bring them both up with momentary shock. Their mother had aged almost beyond recognition. . . . There was a sudden welling up of long forgotten tenderness in Margaret and it was in a softened voice, filled with pain, that she spoke when at last they entered the room.

"Mother," she said kindly, and reached out her arms. "You'll come back with us, mother dear, and we'll take care of you."

She did not notice that there was a new quality in the bearing of her mother: in her eyes it stood out clearly and it gave firmness to her lips. Mrs. Winters had tasted, in an artificial manner it is true, of a certain freedom. It was as if, having all the days of her life been bent, she had stood up and found it most desirable. She would no longer bend of her own accord. In addition, all of her old wariness had given birth to suspicion. She was suspicious of Margaret's soft voice. She was suspicious of her outstretched arms and moved awkwardly out of their reach.

"I won't go back," she said with decision.

James sensed that there was determination in her tone. He was not desirous of seeing Margaret in tears and he did not want to prolong the scene. He looked shamefacedly around. They were alone, but he grew red in the face, nevertheless, knowing that beyond this room were people who might hear what went on. He determined to cut short the talk and pleading.

"Now, look here, mother. You're coming right back with us. Don't let's argue here. You'll tell us all you think of us when you come home. This is no place for talking. Do you see?" He advanced toward her, meaning to place his hand on her shoulder.

She drew back fearful that he would strike her. "Don't hit me," she called. "Don't hit me! I won't go back. You can't make me. I won't go." The motion of her son's hand had broken down all of her determination. Now she was no longer of the free. Again she had become what she had been before her flight, cowed and enslaved.

"He won't hit you. Can't you see he wants you and all of us to get together and be friends, mother?" asked Margaret. But if it were really her desire to pacify her mother, she lost that impulse when she saw Mrs. Winters was drawing away from James.

"Come now, mother. We are not going to hurt you. We want to take care of you. We want to take you home." In her anger she was raising her voice.

At this James looked gloweringly at her. "Here, now, don't go raising a rumpus yourself. Let me tackle her. Look here, mother, you must come with us. We are not going to let you wander around as you've been doing these few days."

"I won't go back to you." She spoke the words with forced quietness, for the thought of going back brought to her a vision of what her days had been. She felt once again the relentless sameness and unfeelingness of those days, and the sense of complete aloneness which had haunted her when

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

among her sons and daughter swept for a moment about her like a chilling sea. "I won't go back with you." A desperate idea seized upon her and she said: "I don't know you. You are two strangers. What do you want with me?"

James muttered, "Come on now; that's too much." Then he made a move forward and seized his mother by the arm which she thrust upward to fend him off. At this Margaret sought to intervene and reached out her hand to hold him back. "Don't, James," she pleaded. "Don't hurt her."

"Well now, what do you want?" James shouted to Margaret. "Do you want to take her home or leave her running around?" His anger was for Margaret, but his mother was shaking in the violence of his grasp.

"Let me go," she shouted. "Let me alone. I don't know who you are. I don't want to go with you."

What James feared and wanted to avert, happened. He knew that the station master was somewhere near the door. Now the door opened and the bearded face of the station master was thrust in, the eyes keen with suspicion. Then he walked in, eying James and Margaret with a look that questioned them.

"Wa'al, the old lady don't seem no way anxious to go with you," he said, looking from Mrs. Winters to the two young people.

"No, I don't want to go with them. I don't know them. They are strangers to me. I don't know who they are," Mrs. Winters said, her voice unsteady and her whole body trembling in fear that James would strike her.

James was nonplused. He was searching about in his mind for a way out, for some reply that would explain to the station master the anomalous position in which he found himself an uneasy actor. Margaret, however, was not so slow. She moved quickly to the side of the station master and whispered, "Don't you see, there is something wrong with her. Her mind is wrong. Remember the way she was muttering when they found her?"

James was quick to learn. "Yes," he said, his voice becoming soft with kindness. "There's something wrong with her mind."

Mrs. Winters was dazed. Then she began to weep. But the station master felt suddenly that he could not intrude upon such a tragic scene and withdrawing with the words, "There'll be a train soon", he left the door open for them to pass.

Between the two, Margaret drawing and supporting her, James venting his hurt feelings by the painful grip with which he held her, Mrs. Winters was led from the house of the station master. Now she was weeping no longer. There was something pitiable in the air about her, for she seemed like a child exhausted by her crying. But as she was dragged along to the station she began to whimper like a frightened animal and her eyes were sharp with fear. Her hair, loosed by the shaking which her son had given her, made her seem much older than she was.

In the train she sat down and settled into the seat almost unconscious that the eyes of her children were on her. She felt only that she was crushed . . . a child being brought back after playing truant from home. Her breath came in sharp, broken sighs, and she shrank in terror from contact with her daughter seated beside her.

PEORIA PUBLIC LIBRARY
OCT 22 [illegible]
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A SERMON ON READING

By Robert Cortes Holliday

I HAVE just got back from a little visit over Boston way. Unfortunately I have been there but little, and I failed to remember to equip myself properly. I forgot that Boston and its vicinity does not have the mild, dry, delectable winter climate that we enjoy in New York. I went over embellished with a pair of handsome taupe spats. My delicate grey silk tie was unobscured by a muffler. I remember that I used to think (before this trip to Boston) that all the young women who in recent winters have been flaunting these monster galoshes of more or less Russian effect just did that to be, as presumably they considered it, fancy. I now regard these articles of apparel as objects of beauty in their season, revealing in their wearers not affectation but wisdom.

Well, after a day or so in Boston, when I got out to Cambridge, I gave up any further effort at the New York manner. I borrowed some regulation New England accoutrement from my host's sixteen year old son, and went in for going out right in that setting. But this enlightened course I had adopted too late. I had already acquired a very vigorous all night cough, and upon my return to New York a corps of eminent physicians assembled at the scene of my distress pronounced my attack a very severe case of laryngitis. For a period extending well over a week any attempt at vocal articulation has only resulted in my producing a weird jumble of hoarse rumbles and shrill squeaks. And so I have been quite removed from any contact with the active world. I have passed my time in meditation.

The situation has occasioned my meditating upon the matter of one's being removed from contact with the active world. Is there any merit to be got out of such a circumstance? Or is one as hopelessly lost as one at first feels himself to be? With the unaccounted passing of time has come to me a suspicion that perhaps having lost out of the running has its points. I have sometimes had this suspicion, too (that the world is too much with us), when I've been quite well. It has come upon me at times when I have wandered into the still presence of, say, a Rembrandt. How smaller than nothing was all the excitement about art and literature that one had left a few moments before! Would it not be enough, and more than enough for the spirit, for one to sit here for days, and weeks, in communion with ever enduring beauty? Would it matter a particle if in doing this one missed altogether the clatter about the most talked of novel of the hour?

Vain dreaming. One is, it would seem, inexorably bound up with one's own day. As to painting, certainly one would *not* want to have missed, say, Twachtman. And it is one's portion to enjoy in due proportion George Luks as well as Rembrandt. And literature, of course, is a living stream forever flowing on, taking color and direction from the changing ways of man. No, it will not do to sit down by

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a shelf of the immortals; is it not one's part to keep one's mind open, too, to the halfgods as they come and go? Even straws may show which way the current flows.

And so the chap who had felt content with a Rembrandt and the world well lost is pretty soon again caught up into the whirling shuttlecock of the moment, reading as he runs. He answers a letter asking him to recommend a reputable literary agent. He stuffs himself with literary paragraphs concerning the goings and comings of this one and that, one who is maybe the author of a "first novel" said to be about life today in a "prep" school and another who is perhaps going to read his verses somewhere next Saturday afternoon. He takes away with him over the week end more books probably than a very great stylist, Abraham Lincoln, found need of in a lifetime. Not quite the same sort of books however, all just off the press. And yet down deep at his heart's core there is a yearning for *something to read* that is not satisfied. You see (poor soul!) he is in the business — by reading largely he gains his bite and sup — and so he seldom has time, it seems, for reading for (let us say) his immortal soul's sake. It is highly probable, the thought sometimes strikes him, that he has forever lost that art. He must, very likely, go on and on in the round of reading what at the moment is being read; and talking about it very much as everyone else does. So an editorial, speaking of the "plenty of well read, intelligent people of the country, possessed of certain educational and cultural advantages", in a recent issue of "The Literary Review": "Most of them read exactly what the others are reading and talk about it in almost precisely the same way."

But when he was a very young man how magical a thing was reading! How incredibly spacious were those days! He read exactly where the heart listed, and for the thing itself. He spent a full year, I do believe, living in the pages of "The Anatomy of Melancholy"; and when he had come to the end he began it anew. How many months "Gil Blas" occupied him I could not undertake to say. And there, of course, was Cellini, and "Tristram Shandy", and "Lavengro", and others unnumbered. In each new emprise he added a cubit to his stature. He read authors clear through, Jane Austen, Thackeray, Mr. James, at, so to say, a sitting. Current "literary" columns doubtless were about in those days, but curiously enough to him they seemed far away. The din he did not hear, wist not of. The shadows were the realities. Reading was a passion. It sometimes struck him as a shame that one could not reasonably expect to live much longer than three score years and ten, as he would (certainly at the leisurely rate he was going) have to leave unread so much in the great treasure house of the centuries. And yet, after a time, the supply of books in the world's locker which could hold the spirit so completely in thrall seemed to begin to run out.

I know a very intelligent (and a very beautiful) lady who never reads the newspapers, or at least when she does, it is intermittently and by chance. She has suggested to me that I try it for a period now and then — not reading the papers. She assures me that I should find this experiment very refreshing to my mind, and that I should really "miss nothing". During this season of detachment from my ordinary rounds, which has diverted the usual course of my reading (and put

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

into my head these divers little reflections upon reading in general), I have come upon a point in the matter of newspaper reading which I had not considered before. I have perceived that my reading of newspapers has been pretty much specialized, that I have been reading along with the momentous news of the day practically only those things which more or less concerned me in my field of affairs. I would turn through the paper in the morning and in the evening, perhaps with a little briskness, note those things which pertained to my orbit, glance at a front page sensation or two, and pass on to other matters. I was always upset when I missed my particular paper, through some mischance, it might be, connected with going in or out of town, or something like that. No, I am willing to admit that it is a highly intellectual thing to do, but I know that I couldn't learn to live without newspapers.

At this time, when my participation in affairs is in eclipse, I might have thought that newspapers would mean less to me than ordinarily. On the contrary, I find that I read them hour after hour. I send out for papers I never read before. I read endlessly matter of no concern to me whatever in my doings: "Society", "Ocean Travelers", "Arrival of Buyers", "Echoes from Readers", "Barometer Readings", "Real Estate Tranfers", and so on and on. I ponder the comic strips to ascertain their humor. I peruse pages of details about minor heroes of sport totally unknown to me. Nothing is too alien to my habitual thought for me not to pore over it. I read the papers, in short, with that immeasurable thoroughness with which I have observed other persons of large leisure read papers on benches in the parks. I have discovered something about newspaper reading. Now, when you have laryngitis they give you a drug derived from a poppy, called codein, or something like that. Theoretically, its beneficent action is to dull the nerve in your throat, and so diminish the incentive to cough perpetually. Well, among its undoubtable effects is that of dulling the nerves of the brain. It tunes the mind to just the sort of reading I have described. And people who continually read newspapers in that way, as I frequently see them in the subway and elsewhere, I suppose are at the other end of the intellectual scale from the lady who does not read them at all. I shouldn't want to become addicted to that opiate way of reading newspapers, but I fancy I'll find that the experience for a time has been rather refreshing to me. It carries rest of mind further, I think, than not reading at all.

I recollect that during my visit in Cambridge I saw very little attention paid by any member of the family to newspapers. A couple appeared to be taken in regularly, but the children of the household seemed to be the only ones at all drawn to them. Maybe my host was for a few days taking a rest from newspapers such as the lady recommended for me. Since "history in the making", as I believe it is said, is in the newspapers, I should suppose that a distinguished historian and professor of history at Harvard would to some extent look at them; but, at any rate, it was clear that this gentleman was not a slave to them. And this incident in the matter of newspapers brings me around to the point which I had in mind when I set out to put down these desultory reflections.

I found the discovery rather startling, but it seems that, after all, we do not (the population of the country referred to in the editorial in Dr. Canby's

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

journal) all read exactly what the others are reading and talk about it in almost precisely the same way. The lady I have mentioned is a poet; she had quite recently talked and read both in Boston and at Radcliffe College. She is very successful in this activity. My professor's daughter is a student at Radcliffe. It was with something of a shock that I found (in attempting to make light conversation in the way conventional in my circles) that the members of this family were quite unaware that the poet had been there. I began to suspect that they might not even know that Al Kreymborg was again back home.

As you may now be slightly prepared for such an announcement, I'll mention that "Babbitt" they had not read, nor did they seem to be more than faintly interested in any allusion to the book. No, not a particle, it was obvious, did any of them feel any sort of obligation to read anything because it was widely being read. Their intellectual position socially, one saw, had been made quite secure in other ways. There were rooms lined with books. The talk was largely of acting, painting, literature, and travel. But they were quite untrammeled by transient eddies. One felt in the atmosphere here something of the breath of being at the centre of the thing.

My host, on being obliged to leave me alone for a few moments, got down with a gesture of gusto a portly volume of the essays of Schopenhauer, a recent acquisition of his, in which obviously he had been finding much joy. Ah, me! it was in those days when I was very young that I conned by heart the three massive volumes of "The World as Will and Idea". And here was a man of books appreciably older than I who still, it would seem, sits down and revels in something that he reads simply because he wants to — something that there hasn't been a word about in the "literary news" for goodness knows how many years.

Ay, reading in general has got most deplorably to be a very stereotyped proceeding. Literary opinion is very largely manufactured, like political sentiment. A president and a best seller may come about in ways not altogether dissimilar. And it may be strongly suspected that the seemingly popular judgment on a book is rarely a really honest expression of taste.

THE POEMS OF THE MONTH

Selected by David Morton

A PERUSAL of the December magazines for the selection of poems of merit produces one result of interest beyond the interest in the poems themselves. The gleaning from such a reading pursued with a conscious and vigilant guard against bias, shows a preponderance of the established forms over free verse.

What was aimed at was the discovery of poems of distinction of idea and treatment; the matter of form, for the immediate purpose, was put aside as irrelevant. The result reveals that of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the seven poems selected, three are in free verse.

As regards the total amount of poetry printed in the issues examined, the proportion, perhaps, is smaller. But, here, too, the preponderance is in favor of the traditional forms. And it should be added that the magazines used included not alone those intended for general reading, but also the so called "poetry magazines", printed for a special audience presumably discriminating, intelligent, forward looking, and hospitable to meritorious experiment.

Obviously, the tide of free verse, which for some time has seemed less full, is set definitely in the ebb. Some of the protagonists of that phenomenon, in noting the decreased publication of free verse, have maintained with good logic that the condition implies nothing as to the value of the new product. It merely argues a lack of readiness on the part of editors and public, at this time, to recognize that value. The implication is that the new methods will yet have their day.

In a world so full of miracles as this one, it is not for any man to say what assuredly will *not* happen. The positive prophet, with "you just wait" on his lips, has all the advantage. Since the aeroplane, one hesitates to be dogmatic with him. We can only do as he suggests — and wait.

"The Fugitive" is a poetry magazine published by some hearty spirits at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, in which very creditable poetry has been appearing. For its accidental atmosphere, this poem goes far back; but for its breathless impulse to save what may be saved of transient beauty, it is as new as this morning. Mr. Ransom is the editor of "The Fugitive", and the author of the volume "Poems About God".

IN PROCESS OF A NOBLE ALLIANCE

Reduce this lady unto marble quickly,
  Ray her beauty on a glassy plate,
Rhyme her youth as fast as the granite:
  Take her where she trembles, and do not wait,
For now in funeral white they lead her
  And crown her Queen of the House of No Love.
A dirge then for her beauty, Musicians!
  Ye harping the springe that catches the dove.

John Crowe Ransom
—*The Fugitive*

In the following poem, T. Corson Miller has reproduced excellently, it seems to me, the rollicking stave from a mind whose business it is to be merry, while yet sensible of the pathos of existence.

DAGONET MAKES A SONG FOR THE KING

Ay, ay O ay, if love be lean in the halls of the jewelled years,
Why set a dish of blood for the King, spiced with wine and tears.
  Let honor fly to the Witch's Moon,
  While Death comes by on velvet shoon,
Ay, ay O ay, men laugh at fools when wisdom disappears.

Ay, ay O ay, red lips are salt, and the silver cups hang low.
The world strains hard at a leash of hate, where green song-fountains flow.
  Throw dreams for dust in the Jester's eyes,
  Love walks in a Fool's proud paradise,
Ay, ay O ay, if death be life, then all things dead men know.

Ay, ay O ay, in a cloud of prayers time swings to a hidden key.
A glad today means a sad tomorrow, but the worm picks out its tree.
  The stars are woven of angels' hair —
  Good friends are few, O King, beware!
Ay, ay O ay, for a morsel of truth, and the Lord-God pity me!

T. Corson Miller
—*Voices*

The sonnet "Sea Born", also from "Voices", and written by its editor, reveals again Mr. Vinal's gift for the expression of feeling which transpires

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quietly and convincingly in smoothly articulated syllables.

SEA BORN

My mother bore me in an island town,
So I love windy water and the sight
Of luggers sailing by in thin moonlight—
I wear the sea as others wear a crown!
My mother bore me near the spinning water,
Water was the first sound upon my ears,
And near the sea her mother bore her daughter,
Close to a window looking on the weirs.
Ever a wind is moaning where I go,
I never stand at night upon a quay,
But I must strain my eyes for sails that blow,
But I must strain my ears to hear the sea.
My mother bore me in a seaport town,
I wear the sea as others wear a crown!

Harold Vinal
—*Voices*

Arthur Davison Ficke, who has enriched the sonnet literature of today enormously, may not be at his best in the following; but there is here his characteristic distinction of feeling, and of phrase and line.

MY PRINCESS

I have known but one princess in my day. . . .
I always knew that princesses would wear
Long strings of pearls wound through their golden hair,—
That they were young and delicate as some fay
Caught in mid-forest, and that smiles must live
Like sunlight in the swift blue of their eyes.
A princess, though a hunted fugitive,
Surely still trails her cloud of mysteries!
But this my princess was distressed and tired,
Her eyes were puffy and her hands were old;
She had forgotten all she once desired;
Eternal greyness held her in its fold:—
A sick old woman, shuffling down the way
That leads to where the story's end is told.

II

And yet a princess is a princess still,
Though she remembers, forty years behind,
The days when lovers to the Hollow Hill
Came for her sake; and lonely, bitter, blind,
My princess was my princess as she said—
"I will deny, while I have living breath,
All that is lonely, bitter, blind," she said:
"I will allege life, though I look on death.
All things are nothing. Happiness is a dream.
Yet now that I am honored with the old
I will contest everything but that gleam
Which makes, a little while, the days of gold.
Spare me your kindness! — For my pennon shall stream,
Down to the place where the story's end is told."

Arthur Davison Ficke
—*Scribner's Magazine*

Mr. McClellan's poem, which opens with such clear and bell-like sounds, and shining particularity, deepens its music and amplifies its outlook in a manner that leaves the imagination listening and looking beyond it.

GAYOSO GIRLS ARE GOLDEN

Gayoso girls are golden,
And gleam forever where
In his still mind he sees them
Bright-limbed and bare.
Marble is naught, nor brass,
To living flesh that glows,
But though all flesh shall wither
Still Beauty blows
Over the pool of the mind
To man on his balconnade,
And Beauty ascends the stairs
And cannot fade.

Walter McClellan
—*The Double-Dealer*

Hortense Flexner (who is the wife of Wyncie King, the well known caricaturist) is the author of the collection "Clouds and Cobblestones". Though not specializing in the sonnet form, to the extent that Mr. Ficke has done, she is the author of some distinguished contributions in that field. One remembers her "Return From Captivity", a sonnet whose theme of epic proportions is adequately handled in the limits of fourteen lines. Her sonnet "The Death Mask of An Unknown Soldier" was awarded a vote of honor by the Poetry Society of America.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JUDGMENT

I wish my ghost might serve as juryman,
One of a passive body come to hear
The cause of Life — the fruit against the plan —
Plead by the living, could they but speak clear.
There would be murky tales, grim case on case,
A witness here would show his heart of gall,
And Beauty would look out with starry face,
And Pain would sit secure against the wall.

I wonder then, if I being free and done
With agony and sweat, should cast my vote
For Life — remembering passion and the sun
On warming clay, the spring wind at my throat;
Or if I'd look at Pain and wink an eye
And of an old grudge, vote to let Life die?

Hortense Flexner
—*The New Republic*

A vivid impression of personality in the subject — if not an altogether pleasant one — is communicated in the following:

THE RIVER

Passive, voiceless —
Eloquent with endurance.
Years pass,
Villages rise and fall.
Little songs of contentment sing themselves in the river's heart.

Not always peaceful:
Sometimes a sly mouth
Sucks in a victim.
The ignorant say:
"The wind was high;
The boat was leaky."
We know, we old ones.
Placid river,
Stupid river.
Little songs of peace.

Lena Jamison Hay
—*The Nomad*

In turning over the pages of the "The Measure", one pauses for a second reading of

THE DISILLUSIONED

They call us cold and proud
That are humble and passionate
And cynical
That are wistful to believe . . .
Who was it
Robbed us of our Gods?

It is true we will not clothe us
In rags and tatters
And we go bare of illusions.
Are not our young bodies
Beautiful and strange?

We are the true humble
That go making a new testament,
Forming a new covenant. . . .
Deny us not.

Robert J. Roe
—*The Measure*

and also of

LOVE'S HUMILITY

I cannot remember you
After you go.
I hold you as the poplar holds the storm
That turns it to beautiful tumult
And covers the glint of its leaves
With abashed white eyelids.

Beatrice Ravenel
—*The Measure*

The end of such a task of selection discovers a mood half regretful. For every poem selected, another must be rejected. It would be pleasant, for example, to quote Elinor Wylie's "Quarrel", in "The Century", and Winifred Welles's "Hunting Days" from "The Measure", and Paul Tanaquil's "Ancient" from "The Lyric West". But an end must be made.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE CRYSTAL BOX

Fragments of Autobiography

By Hugh Walpole

VI: GLEBESHIRE

I CANNOT remember when I was not fascinated by maps. And my favorite game for a long period was to shut my eyes and plant my thumbs blindly onto some spot in the universe, and discover then how to get there. My journeys were many and fantastic.

I wearied then of a reality which I could never attain, seeing myself at that period of my life doomed to what old John Brown used to call a "sitting" life as an English country curate. It came to me in a flash one day that I would much more nearly reach my country did I have one all my own, kept from me neither by slenderness of purse nor an exasperating ill sequence of Continental trains. Invent a country I did, and with the country a train service, and with the train service a system of counties and states, and with the counties and states town laws and county councillors, a social system, and with the social system a Royal Family and an Ancient Lineage —

Slipping off as I have always been so deeply tempted to do, from the general to the particular, it was very soon the Ancient Lineage that I found especially tempting. I made out a genealogy that put Genesis and Exodus to shame and filled pages of small notebooks.

The family I remember were the Proto-Smiths and the name of most of the kings was Hubert. So long a line did we have that we reached Hubert XXXVI, and he died without issue, the title passed to his cousins, the Wembleys, and I went to a Public School.

I did not, so far as I remember, draw another map that I might dwell in until my year in Liverpool when, as I have already narrated in tense fragments, I began, in addition to my labors as a missionary, my first novel "The Abbey" — that novel that was to appear twenty years later as "The Cathedral".

The town of whose life, spiritual and material, the Abbey was the chief glory existed from the first so vividly in my mind that I must draw a picture of it; and it was from that picture, I suppose, that Polchester ultimately derived. I could not then and I cannot now draw, but my little wobbly lines and scratches represented something very definite in my mind. I gave the streets names, rebuilt the Town Hall, and put up a statue to a Crimean general in the market place.

Polchester soon began to have an astonishing vitality in my mind. I have been asked on many occasions as to its real origin and I can only say that it had no origins. Something of Truro is in it, something of Durham, but in truth it is nakedly Polchester and nowhere else at all.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

For some years it was only the Cathedral and its environs that I had at all minutely investigated. The cathedrals of fiction in my memory are not very many. There is that one that veiled the mystery of Edwin Drood, and in spite of Dickens's genius it remains I think less as a cathedral than as a background for the wicked Jasper's plots and plans. There is the wonderful Notre Dame of Victor Hugo, there is the Glasgow Cathedral in "Rob Roy" — and there is Barchester. After the publication of my own "Cathedral" I had of course Trollope thrown up at me a good deal — but I may say not so much as I had expected.

No one will ever beat me in the race of Trollopians. "Barchester Towers" was one of the first novels I ever read and I will not be able to say how many times I have reread it since that first thrilling occasion. But of all the many impressions that "Barchester Towers" and its companion volumes make upon me the actual Cathedral itself is one of the least vivid. I don't see Barchester Cathedral although I have the best will in the world to do so and, curiously enough, I have never seen a picture of it. There have been many Trollope illustrators. Not one of them so far as I know has ever made an illustration of the Cathedral — which goes to prove, I think, that the Cathedral itself is not important.

This is not, in reality, very curious. Trollope was never very deeply interested in the psychology of religion. That is not to say that he was not religious. He was a good man in the full sense of the mid-Victorian meaning — orthodox not from convenience but from conviction, neither priggish nor a moralist, but filled to the brim with a simple faith from which he never wavered.

"Robert Elsmere" would, I am sure, have seemed a wicked book to him; he no more had doubts about the Christian faith than he had about fox hunting; and religious doubt would have been as dangerous a theme for fiction to him as would adultery. Adultery (very mild) he once used as a motive and got rapped over the knuckles for his pains.

The Barchester novels are not religious books. There is not I think one account of Divine Service in the course of them. Old Mr. Harding does on one occasion enter the Cathedral for prayer, but as soon as he enters the doors close and we are excluded. It is never about religion that the Bishop, Mrs. Proudie, Archdeacon Grantley are concerned but about matters of business, precedence, social entertainments, and so on. It is true that poor Mr. Crawley is deeply religious but the plot of which he is the central figure is concerned with a missing sum of money and it is his worldly troubles that are most insisted upon.

There is one modern cathedral in English fiction of which I must speak for a moment and that is the cathedral in a book called "The Nebuly Coat" by Meade Falkner. Meade Falkner is the author of "The Lost Stradivarius" and "Moonfleet", and those two with "The Nebuly Coat" are three of the best romantic stories of our time. "The Nebuly Coat" appeared a long while ago now and I don't know why Meade Falkner has abandoned the career of a novelist.

It is a thousand pities that he has done so, but perhaps the realism of the present time is against him. In any case "The Nebuly Coat" contains a wonderful cathedral. Here is a structure that is real in its every detail — real and mysterious too. You feel the tower toppling all through the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

book — the music, the architecture haunt every page.

Here too the religious aspect of the subject is underemphasized. It is horror, anticipation, rich romance that we feel. "The Nebuly Coat" is no cousin at all either to Mr. Huysmans or Mrs. Humphry Ward, but it is a splendid creation and should not be forgotten. I had, I suppose, something of all these buildings in my mind when Polchester came out of the mists, but I don't know that any of them very deeply influenced me. The best description of a church that I have ever read anywhere is in the beginning of Mr. Proust's "Swann" novel, but I read that for the first time only last year.

When my cathedral was there before me and Canon's Yard and Bodger's Street and the Precincts, I began to look at the rest of the town. The High Street did borrow something from Durham, I must confess, just as Orange Street owes something to the Lemon Street of Truro — but Polchester first had its concrete evidence in the pages of "Jeremy", and his quarters at the top of Orange Street had very little to do with "The Cathedral". Gradually I penetrated down the hill and with the discovery of Sea Town my vision of the city was complete. Sea Town suddenly became to me of the greatest importance. It was connected not only with the love affairs of young Brandon but also with the life and death of Harmer John — and Harmer John I love more than any other character of my heart and brain.

Old rotting timbers, tumbling walls, grass grown streets have always had as great an attraction for me as they had for Quilp. I have drawn the pictures of more old ghost haunted houses than I care to remember and I shall draw more yet.

Of the qualities noticed in my books I have been praised more for "atmosphere" than for any other, and I think in my heart I have always resented this because I deeply believe that it is by character creation first, character creation second, and character creation all the time that novels live and have their being. I would rather be praised for Perrin, Mrs. Trenchard, Henry, Ronder, Maggie, Brandon, Harmer John than for all the atmospheric successes in the world — and yet I would I think rather have written "The House of the Seven Gables" than most novels in the English language, so perhaps I am wrong after all.

Whether that be true or no it is certain that Glebeshire County soon began to grow in detail, shape, and form widely beyond the walls of Polchester. I am not a careful writer, but if only people knew how desperately muddled a mind I have they would wonder that I ever get anything clear at all. Glebeshire is still clear to me only in spots. It is placed geographically in my mind between Devon and Cornwall, enclosing the southern part of one and the northern of the other. I remember that my friend J. D. Beresford abused me once for calling it Glebeshire, a name as it seemed to him quite unsuited to that southern toe of England. But when I think of the Devonshire and Cornish valleys, so rich and luxuriant, and the lovely lines of the ruddy brown plowed land rising against the deep blue of the Cornish sky, I cannot feel that Glebeshire is an ill name. In any case Glebeshire it is and Glebeshire it will always be.

The other country in all Great Britain that seems to me to be southern England's only true rival for beauty and romance is to myself (and our

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

choice of country is the most partial and prejudiced emotion in our blood) the Lake District, and of that I hope to write one day if I only take long enough; but Glebeshire more than any other part of the world that I know has the glory of an astounding contrast. The coast is sharp and rugged, masculine in places and ferocious. The inland valleys are loaded with flowers deep in streams, colored with southern brilliance; and you get, in Rafiel for instance, four or five of those valleys running to the very margin of the sea; so that standing on rugged promontories you look out to a furious tossing grey streaked sea, and looking back you see green blankets of wood threaded with purple water starred with yellow and crimson flowers.

Those same rocky creeks and promontories are packed with history. On one rock are the remains of a castle battered now almost to invisibility but inhabited once by Roger Carlyon the poet, whose three sons had afterward so strange a story, whose epic "Tristam and His Companions" remains now only in fragments, whose death was so amazing, whose figure is said still to haunt the coast.

My friend Maradick, widowed and alone in these postwar days, returned once to Treliss to see whether he could recapture any of the magic that he had known there twenty years before. Treliss was changed by char-à-bancs, by automobiles, by a trickle of creeping villas, beyond all recognition, but he met on one of his walks the youngest of Carlyon's sons. They became friends and through him he heard all that story. And one day it shall be told.

In Rafiel itself, only a year or so ago, Henry Trenchard himself, grown now to man's estate and the author of that very successful book "Pontifex and His Day", had his most romantic, most incredible adventure. *That* story will not be told until the days of this present realism be overpast.

Realistic enough though is the whole history of the Courtois family in the rocky hamlet of St. Tad below St. Mary's Moor. The Courtois had lived for centuries in Tad Manor on the hill above the hamlet and all had gone quietly well with them until the Reverend John Courtois married, late in life, a London girl and brought her down to his home. What happened to him then — what madnesses of jealousy, hatred, remorse, and mysticism drove in upon him, how she suffered and how she finally escaped — that, too, is a story that deserves some telling.

On the northern coast too, there are many stories waiting their narrator. There is a long bar of sandy deserted country stretching between St. Locke and Lebersmere that is crowded with history.

Lebersmere indeed is one of the strangest spots in all Britain. There are some fishing huts, a bar of quicksand in which many a life has been lost before now, and a high gaunt eighteenth century house on the cliff now empty, deserted with gaping window panes and creaking doors. The ghost of Lebersmere Hall is a girl with a baby in her arms, who creeps up to the grass grown doorway, falls exhausted, then the door is seen to open, a skinny hand and arm appears, the girl is drawn within, a scream of agony and terror wails down the wind.

It was a few miles inland from Lebersmere that the Seagrim Farm was situated. The young Seagrim boys, that violent brood, grew up here; it was from here that the old man Sea-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

grim was carried out to his burial, and it was in one of the top floor bedrooms that he met so mysteriously his death. If ever a house is haunted by ghosts that must be the one, and by none more steady eyed, more unflinching, more resolute than Mother Seagrim herself! Hers is the figure to which my eyes constantly return! So often have I half begun to tell her story, so often been checked by the thought that I do not know it quite securely enough, that I am not sufficiently sure of my ground.

I can see her, that young girl in her fresh pink bonnet, looking with loving gaze up to Reuben Seagrim towering above her. I can see her ten years later as the knowledge slowly comes to her of what those three boys are going to mean to her with their cruelty, their ferocity, their wild scorn of her. I can see her as she faces her fate, see her after her husband's death when she is left alone in that place with those three sons, see her in that last grim battle when she wins her way to freedom. . . .

That is what Lebersmere and the country round it means to me — Daisy Seagrim and her
day I will tell *that* sto

There are places i
Glebeshire that are s
those blank places in a
But there are enough stories
here to last me a lifetime. And can
you tell any cheerful ones? I think "Jeremy" and "The Green Mirror" and "The Young Enchanted" are cheerful. But Glebeshire is I think a grim country — beautiful, astoundingly, but strange, foreign, remote in its spirit.

The valleys are warm and colored but they seem to be there on protest. Polchester has many a gay and happy time — it is a sleepy place today and sleepy places are I suppose happy. But Polchester is not Glebeshire. No, not by a long way. I have a fancy that one day the sea will come sweeping over that thin peninsula and will flood the streets and creep up the hill and waves will beat against the windows of the Cathedral and only the rock will remain, jagged and gaunt, and the sea gulls will flock to it and build their nests there.

But I don't know. I shall be dead then. So what will it matter?

I SHALL LOVE LIGHTLY

By Dorothy Dow

I SHALL love lightly . . . lightly as a leaf's fall:
I shall love quickly . . . only for an hour:
Then I shall leave him, when we have known it all,
Swift as a brushing wing, soft as a flower.

There shall be nothing burdensome to bind him —
Save some deep look hidden in the embers:
Out of our passion, only this shall linger . . .
Some small glory that the heart remembers.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE SKETCH BOOK

MR. STRACHEY AND THE FRENCH MIND

By Charles Vouga

IN his recent "Books and Characters (French and English)" Lytton Strachey's talent bespeaks for itself such remarkable insight, such intimate acquaintance with French ways and byways, such handsome impartiality, that appreciations from so authorized a source cannot leave us indifferent if wrong on no less important a question than this one: Do the French admire Shakespeare or do they merely tolerate him?

When, for instance, the author of "Eminent Victorians" chooses Ingres the painter and Lemaître the critic as spokesmen of French opinion, and rests his case on their fancies, I cannot help but feel that almost personal distress which he says Mr. Bayley, in his criticism of French poets, brings by his verdict on Racine. Claiming, in his attempt to explain the violence of national differences, that strictures such as Mr. Bayley's on French poetry are entirely due to the disastrous fallaciousness of a critical method — "the method which attempts to define the essential elements of poetry in general, and then proceeds to ask of any particular poem whether it possesses these elements, and to judge accordingly" — how is it that Mr. Strachey fails so utterly to perceive to what extent Ingres and Lemaître were themselves its devotees?

What of Tolstoy's opinion of Shakespeare, if you please, Mr. Strachey? Heaven knows the piles of bricks which the author of the religion of human suffering threw at the Bard of Avon! Yet could we in all fairness declare that he voiced the judgment of Russia's cultivated classes? Indeed not, for Tolstoy was under that spell which caused him to write his famous "What is Art?", and with what fervor the grand old fellow took his new lights, we all know.

On the decline of his earthly career, Jules Lemaître also landed in some sort of religious harbor. But his reasons for the adventure being more social than personal, it so happened that instead of finding there only the raptures of spiritual meditation he discovered, too, a museum of dust worn political and literary dogmas to which he catered now with all the enthusiasm of a neophyte. "The Frenchman has a way, partly as a result of his logical stringency, of connecting the literary problem with the religious problem and then running the religious problem in turn into the political problem." These words of Mr. Babbitt, Harvard professor of French literature, in his "Masters of Modern French Criticism", fit admirably Lemaître's mind. Thence on, he was known as a traditionalist, a monarchist, a staunch nationalist. Thence on, Lemaître, the master subjectivist, the clear headed freeman who proclaimed that liberty was the beginning of wisdom in art as elsewhere, became the stern defender of those reactionary standards to which even his French good sense now surrendered.

His onslaught on Rousseau speaks for itself. In bygone days, the father of the French Revolution had been

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

among his favorites. For many things did he give him credit. But, *autres temps, autres mœurs;* he felt that his new friends were entitled to an apology for his former cult; and so came his startling Rousseau lectures of which it would be hard to say — partly because of the quality of his audience — whether they belonged to the realm of literature or to that of politics. How well he succeeded in swinging around can be gauged by the attitude of the press, newspapers of a sarcastic mood drawing parallel texts of Lemaître, *première et deuxième manière. . . .* Because he could see in Racine the traditionalist, the French Catholic, the monarchist, the pure artist, he chose him the following year. Lemaître, from the very start, acknowledged that the love for Racine is largely made up of a feeling of literary nationalism, and, this granted, he exploited him for the benefit of the canons and principles which, quite reasonably, Mr. Strachey finds so difficult to accept.

Why should an English scholar take such exception to the statement that tragedy is a truly French form of art which one seldom finds among the English, when the English scholar himself, with utmost lucidity, shows to what narrow meaning his French colleague brings the word. With shattered wings, Lemaître could ill afford to take another view. Indeed, the three unities themselves now belonged to his credo, as much so as the infallibility of the pope!

Let us not forget, however, that there was, and there remains, another Lemaître, and that "Shakespeare, the sovereign poet" are words which once flowed from this Frenchman's very lips. Poor Lemaître! Fear was the secret of his change of front. His national egotism is far more the instinctive reaction of a patriot keen enough to hear the distant rumble of the Great War and see the clouds fast gathering on his country, than the natural bent of his French culture.

And Ingres. He stands out even more as a schoolmaster, *l'homme d'une doctrine,* than as a great artist in the eyes of his own people. No less an authority than Taine said of him that "he lived in Paris like a diver in a bell, shutting every crack through which the outside air could enter". Quite recently Léon Bérard, under secretary for French fine arts, called him the bitter theoretician of academism for whom nature was "stylized" and immovable. If in the "Apotheosis of Homer" Ingres merely tolerated Shakespeare, Republican France amply atoned for his mistake. On the monument erected to Hugo, the father of Hamlet and the father of the Iliad are in the front rank, side by side. Dante, Corneille, and others are also present, while, strange enough, Racine is altogether left out, ignored or forgotten!

Have I somewhat impaired in my reader's mind the right of these otherwise eminent Frenchmen to speak for the whole of France? I hope so. The issue, however, in this case is great enough to require further evidence, and witnesses are not lacking. Yesterday it was Dumas who called Shakespeare "the poet who had created most, after God". It was Sainte-Beuve, the Thomas Aquinas of French criticism. It was Flaubert, who wrote to Georges Sand: "I read nothing now except Shakespeare, whom I have taken up again from one end to the other. It invigorates you and puts air into your lungs as if you were on the top of a high mountain. Everything seems flat by the side of that prodigious *bonhomme.*" Yesterday it

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was, of course, Hugo and the romantic movement acclaiming him as their father.

Today a man like Edmond Haraucourt, director of the Cluny Museum, "tolerates" Shakespeare enough to exclaim:

O Poète immortel qui pétrissais les âmes,
Frère de Dieu . . .
Du seul baiser des mots tu procréais des hommes.
Quand tu leur disais: marche, ils partaient triomphants,
Roi des âges, et plus vivants que nous ne sommes —
La mort passe sur nous sans toucher tes enfants.

And Emile Faguet: "Shakespeare was a genius. . . . With the exception of the ancients, the stage has only three great psychologists, Shakespeare, Molière and Ibsen." In his referendum about Shakespeare he it is who explains how the Romanticists loved him for himself, and the Classicists *as a weapon* against Hugo.

As for the eighteenth century it behaved, did it not, pretty well after all? Madame de Pompadour had a Shakespeare in French. Madame du Barry had one in English. Outstanding characters of the times, play writers and statesmen, *gens de robe et gens d'Eglise*, feminine constellations in the literary firmament, did not spare their praises. And Garrick, by his brilliant impersonations of Lear, Hamlet, and Macbeth, took Paris by storm. If Voltaire became Shakespeare's bitterest enemy, for reasons altogether foreign to dramatic art, let us remember that, half a century before, revealing him to the French, he is the man who declared: "Most of the eccentric or *gigantesque* ideas of this author have acquired, after two hundred years, the right to pass for sublime."

Always played in France before crowded houses, long before the *Entente Cordiale* — it cannot be said that the great Englishman is admired only out of a sense of duty by the French people. Through him do they commune indeed with England's best and perennial qualities.

Thousands of readers in the Anglo-Saxon world, impressed by the very ease with which Mr. Strachey delves into French matters, will deem the French people more "insular" than they really are. For having built some fine bridges over the Channel, Mr. Strachey is to be heartily congratulated. Let him not, therefore, unwittingly destroy this well tested one, Shakespeare, of all perhaps the best.

ARE WRITERS HUMAN?

By Nan Maury Lightfoot

IN an impromptu speech made at a very literary luncheon, a southern college president proclaimed that writers were "just like other human beings". I am holding no brief for this gentleman's viewpoint, but only making three statements which seem to uphold it. To prove these I will use as evidence some notes made by me as secretary of the Virginia Writers Club while James Branch Cabell was president, and Margaret Montague and Kate Langley Bosher were vice presidents. The club is composed of forty members, twenty of whom have published books, the rest being magazine writers of more and less renown — altogether a fairly good body from which to draw conclusions.

First. *Writers have differences of opinion, like doctors, and other human beings.*

This became evident at one of our

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

earliest meetings during a discussion of how to write poetry — one member advocating a lack of preparedness, while another not only believed in preparedness in this life, but asserted that to be a poet one must have poetic ancestors. A third said that the greatest inspiration for writing poetry came while listening to a thoroughly dull sermon.

The chairman had previously requested that members having favorite poems to read aloud should not bring anything longer than "Paradise Lost". The opinions on the poems read were widely divergent also, one writer admitting that he liked humorous verse, while another said he enjoyed old, very sad poems, similar, I suppose, to that one positively forbidding the curfew to ring tonight. He confessed that he had shed many tears over the fate of little Casabianca until comforted by learning that he was "eating peanuts by the peck". (It seems to me, that occupation might be equally as deadly as a burning ship.)

It is not from lack of further evidence as to differences of opinion that I go on to the next subject.

Second. *In politics, writers are like human beings.*

Our second election of officers took place one night after an address by Mr. Reilly, the Chicago publisher, who has patronized our wares to the extent of publishing books by four of the members. An excellent plan had been devised by which new officers were to be elected, but the unruly members refused to conduct things in an orderly manner. When the secretary began to pass around the voting slips she was met with:

"What are you giving us these *pieces of paper* for?" "We're not going to do it *that* way." And, "Here take this back — I don't want it."

Meanwhile, it seems, the Bolsheviki in the club had, by a rising vote, reelected the old officers. When the crestfallen secretary returned to her seat she was greeted with these gracious words from President Cabell, "Of course I knew you would *engineer* it so as to get yourself reelected." And he further insinuated that she had bribed the voters with a campaign fund of 34 postals (a recent gift) to keep herself in this profitable position. I trust the reader sees the similarity between these literary and lay politicians.

Third. *Writers are no more insane than other human beings.*

On one occasion we had two neurologists to speak to us, the subject being "The Subconscious Mind in Literary Work". It must have amused the public no little to see in the papers the following morning that the Virginia Writers Club had called in two specialists in diseases of the brain. And the readiness with which these doctors accepted shows they thought our club no barren field for future patients. Yet the discussion which followed proved beyond a doubt that the writers were not controlled by the subconscious mind but used it to do their work for them from time to time. One member even asked for a prescription to make her subconsciousness work, not just occasionally but all the time, like an industrious servant. (A mind, I suppose, that would not even ask for Thursday afternoon off or expect her to get Sunday night supper!) The president alone expressed amazement at the idea of another mind working for you while you slept, and said it "sounded like cheating" to him.

Although I may have proved in part that writers collectively are human, it is not easy to prove them so individually, and particularly is it difficult to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

decide in one instance. Many reviewers have insisted that James Branch Cabell is one, or all, of the characters in his books, but if this be true, then who is it that has been president of our club for three years and bears no resemblance to Kennaston, Charteris, or the Duke of Logreus? It will take careful analysis of our association with this unrealist and his attitude toward the club, to decide whether he is a character in a book or a human being.

Mr. Cabell is the shyest man imaginable. He came to the creating of the club, and upon arriving evidenced all the misery of a captive delivered over to the enemy — yet still a captive at bay. He was elected president that night, and read aloud in a low voice a paper — part of the manuscript of "Beyond Life" — then hastily retired into the background, giving place to Margaret Prescott Montague.

The first very inhuman trait noticeable in our new executive was his modesty, showing in an inability not to blush when complimented. This became most apparent one night after "Beyond Life" had been published, when the writers gave up a whole evening to its praising. As this praising progressed it became more and more evident that Mr. Cabell, who was facing the audience, was not "born to blush unseen".

He was far from an ideal president in many ways, even though he turned much of the management over to a friend whom we soon christened "the Mr. House of this administration". One trait which did change Mr. Cabell into a book character was his habit of becoming detached while listening to the program. Then Jurgen's biographer, as he was busily engaged in being, was far, far away, in Leukê or Poictesme, "dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before", leaving a shell of himself in his chair.

In other ways, however, our executive took a very human interest in the club. He arranged for his friend Mr. Holt of McBride's to speak to us; and induced Ellen Glasgow to come to the club, suggesting the reception we gave her when "The Builders" was published. He planned to bring in Joseph Hergesheimer who was coming to visit him, but unfortunately Mr. Hergesheimer had to hurry home. Later when Hugh Walpole made a special trip to Virginia to see the author of "Jurgen", Mr. Cabell gave a reception at his home, Dumbarton Grange, so that the Virginia Writers might meet his English guest. Yes, James Branch Cabell has taken a kindly, human interest in the club members, treating each one, regardless of age and his own youthful years, with a sort of grandfatherly benevolence. Is this the Heartbreaker of Hamadryads? To my mind, certainly not. Yet, though he is not a character in his own books, candor compels me to add that, in some ways, his resemblance to "other human beings" is extremely slight.

AND NOW IT MUST BE SOLD

By Madge Jenison

THERE comes a time when a book has to be sold. This sounds routineer, but a shop is really a roll of wishing carpet thirty by fifteen or thereabouts, with a roof over it to keep out the night and a window in front through which you look out to tell when it is time to close. Everybody likes to sell things. I do not know why this is. Trade is one of the great racial motives; it began when the genus was

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

still in its hair toilet. We play it from the time we are four and the nurse gives us ours for saying that our partner is a white livered, chicken hearted coward. A shop is more democratic than a library, a drawing room, a laundry, office, cellar, or the garden under the sky, and we like democracy, I believe, because it is so interesting as well as fair. Democracy, as we all fully understand, is not the upper crust of the societal dish; of course it is not the lower — that would be too dull a feast. It is a cross section and that is the reason it is so varied and fashionable. That cross section comes into a bookshop — two hundred or more of it a day — thinking, or used to thinking. Sometimes it tells you stories as good as "Romeo and Juliet" or "Don Quixote", though not, it is true, of so deft a turn stylistically.

A bookshop is the hardest work in the world and it is the most entertaining, important, grateful, happy, and urgent. Bookshops "knock at the door of the future". They could open it, if they were more afire, wider than schools and universities because they cater to those in action, quicker than public libraries because they are in the thick of affairs instead of on tops of hills or flights of marble steps. Give me a great book and I will wring civilization out of a stone.

The crisis of fate with a book is that it must be read. There are good books enough but people do not read them. That is the gap — the bookshop. The feminist question was settled when Mill wrote "On the Subjection of Women", but in fifty years the entire population of the world, except some five hundred thousand perhaps, has not read it.

You must have an idea to open a good bookshop — some way of losing your own soul and becoming life itself. Even a feeling takes the place of an idea. It is very hard to differentiate feelings and ideas. One is so likely to become the other while you turn away to admire the sunset. The person who feels something is likely to get it into an idea, and then an object you can touch. A bookshop does not have to be charming or any of the things one hears about them — it has only to have in it the rush of blood in the veins. It must be warm.

I do not know any other pursuit except family life which calls upon all the resources of the vital motor and reflective temperaments in a single skin, as does bookselling in your own shop. A bookshop is drowned in detail. Every bookseller needs one strong willing intelligent wife who can clean floors competently, is a patient duster, can keep up the ordering, wrap neatly, check packages that come in from the publishers, mark in prices, file, deliver if necessary; who knows bookkeeping, can use a typewriter, may be called upon to read interesting books aloud to one at night when one's eyes are tired or to make digests of the less interesting volumes, and is able to preserve a cool pleasant appearance of companionable leisure intact for shop use. A nice peaceful thing like a bookseller's convention at Atlantic City with three sessions a day and conferences between seems restful in comparison with a bookshop when you return to it.

The routine goes something like this. You arrive at quarter of nine. The antique store man with the patterned waistcoat and old English complexion who is next door says that quarter of ten is a good business hour, but having had a grandmother who did the day's work before breakfast gets you there at quarter of nine.

No boy.

8:45 — 9:30. Clean shop. A little

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

disheveling but pleasant when you see it complete.

9:30 — 10:00. Window cleaner who completely destroys window just accomplished. Business man in great hurry, used to pressing buttons and having everything happen on a spring, who says:

"Have you that life of Queen Elizabeth?"

"Do you mean perhaps Strachey's 'Queen Victoria'?"

Business man, visibly regarding the matter as off his morning list, "Probably — one of those French queens anyway."

Nice woman you like. At the age when she prefers lives and letters to lyric poetry. Buys Tomlinson and Virginia Woolf.

10:00—10:30. Quick jump through morning mail: Irate lady objecting because we sent birthday present to her husband's employer C. O. D. (How in heaven's name did we happen to do that?) Four pages from another describing "The Birds' Christmas Carol". If we can identify this book she will send us $1.00 for it.

Usual girl: "I have a small amount of capital and I have always wanted to open a bookshop, etc. etc."

10:30 — 11:30. Friend who wants to leave her baby while she goes to picture exhibit. Credit man from Macmillan's — agitating. Leggy little girl with topaz eyes like a sable collie's:

"Mother, may I have this? — Mother may I have this?"

"Anne, I have told you carefully that you can have only three books this morning."

Leggy little girl reflectively, as account is being totaled, "Mother can have nine books and I can have only three."

Odious child!

11:30 — 1:15. More customers. Girl from Akron, Ohio, who stays two hours — looks at everything — enjoys everything. So average that you are afraid to look away for fear her personality will utterly disappear. Conscientious mother looking for reading for daughters 16 to 21. Prefers they should not read love stories. Young fellows from all the neighboring advertising firms, publishing houses, and law offices, buying all the nicest things. Very well known and important woman — lamp shade drops on her head.

1:15 — 2:30. Calm after the storm.

More mail: Letter asking where writer can purchase peacock eggs. Letter asking for list of books for children three to thirteen. Enclosed please find two cent stamp. Man in Honolulu to whom I sent gingery letter about his bill sends check, photograph of himself, his horse, and his jungle, and box of oranges.

Survey of stock room to see whether morning's orders are all out.

2:30 — 2:40. Lady in heavy mourning. Says in low voice that she is Mrs. Whitney, has come in answer to our card about some books ordered by her husband. With the slightest tremulousness of the lips tells us that her husband has died suddenly. Mr. Whitney having been a pleasant florid gentleman of the type one cannot connect with dying, long a habitué of the shop and comrade of caucuses on books hours without end, one can only stammer out one's surprise and distress. A package of books sent to Miss Ethel Carson at a hotel in Banff has been returned and the card to notify him has come in due course to his widow's attention. Lady in sumptuous mourning stares a little curiously at address. Card fluttering out of top book reads, "To my darling chum." Situation seems to become suddenly very cold and shuddery, and lady in mourning

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sweeps out leaving books and audience in a heap.

2:40 — 3:00. Luncheon at neighboring restaurant with nibbles at two novels just in on a new English order.

3:00 — 4:00. Fragmentary attempts to answer mail. English author who makes the shop his club while in America wants to buy it as a kind of headquarters of wonder apparently.

4:00 — 5:00. Distinguished English poetess, stout, best tailor mades, and cane. Complexion to make you write an ode. Come to see whether we carry her books. Electrifies all comers by smoking large black cigars as she makes a tour of the shelves. Introduced to Hendrik Van Loon, proceeds to kill his book. Van Loon produces from his pocket some lovely sugar cookies recently presented to him. Cookies good but conversation better.

5:00 — 6:30. More customers and more customers.

6:30. Key in the lock.

6:30 — 7:30. Accounts. Daily crisis of personality. Try to catch balance looking the other way. Try recounting money. Try readding column of expenditures. Try retotaling day's sales. Partner tries. Architect who has come to take partner to dinner tries: by simple expedient of item named Unrecorded Expenditures quickly makes it all perfectly neat and clear.

7:30 — 8:00. Survey of correspondence and immediate emergencies and layout of evening's work.

8:00 — 9:00. Dinner. Another nibble at English order. Auctioneer from down the street joins you gracefully at table and tells stories of his life not altogether colorless.

9:00 — 11:00. Letters and lists on every question under the vagrant sun.

11:00 — 11:20. Subway and a last large bite of the last Norman Douglas.

11:20 — 11:40. Hair tonic and review of one's assets and defects. Last articulate thought: "Did I surely lock that window?"

"Buying is the fundamental science of all merchandising" but selling is its wheels and oil. Frank Shay says that books sell themselves. His technique is never to speak to a visitor at his shop until he is spoken to. This is a Frank Shay story:

"May I please see the last book of modern verse."

"Certainly, with pleasure, madam."

"Thank you *so* much. I did not want to buy it. I just wanted to look at it."

"I did not want to sell it to you, madam. I just wanted to show it to you."

Marian Cutter says that she tries never to let anybody go out of her shop without having seen something he would not otherwise have seen and having talked a little to someone who was interested.

To me it seems that if a book will sell itself you can sell fifty copies of it. That is all salesmanship is, some idea filtered through a personality. One refines one's approach to a book as one sells it, until one finds almost the phrase for one's relation to it. You cut your words so thin and fine at last that it comes to that; and then you lose interest and go on to something else. I remember that I had almost certain tags for Veblen and Hobson, for Strachey and Lawrence — phrases that would always sell them. It is easy to sell books. It is so easy that it is frightening sometimes, if you had a grandmother who did the day's work before breakfast and regarded even kittens and a garden as responsibilities under which she tottered.

People are the miracle in booksell-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing. It is they who cut the pattern of it so large and trim it with fairy gold and fill it with flashing blood. But bookselling is not all conversation and rose water sprinkled drama. Handsome young men of family and casual young ladies who see it as an encompassing scene through which their temperament can move with gracious and educational effect, do it wrong. The scenery comes out and arranges itself before your eyes in various stern issues and problems. Even if you keep out of debt you do not keep out of being absurd. There is a deep inherent reason in bookselling which those who are to help it play its rôle must understand. It has to do with that primary thing in the life of the human race — the spirit of man. You can be a dilettante with art objects, you can stroll in and out of marriage and parenthood and even the arts as you may practise them, and it does not much matter. But you cannot be a dilettante with ideas because they are — in the best sense of what that lofty word can convey — divine.

What figures we have in the book trade indicate that only about 200,000 people in this country buy books. I do not buy books. Here in THE BOOKMAN one can tell the truth. Once in a mountain of moons somebody flips me a present of a check when I have enough shoes, or leaves me a legacy, and I rush out and have a carnival of Venice of my own especial brand. Otherwise I hardly know how I come by what I read. As I do by my umbrellas perhaps — and I always seem to have plenty of handkerchiefs.

Somehow books must be made to reach into every purse as long as we cling to purses. Surely a market can be made for anything to which the race is already committed, as it is to ideas and delight. It is a problem of imagination and feeling and brains brought to bear on the real business of the race — what it is going to be.

RESTLESS

By Robert J. Roe

I GET tired of the same old house
And the same four walls.
I grow weary of familiar halls
And of clodding down known stairs.

I like to change my quarters now and then.
I like to change my aspect and my clothes
And feel foreign to myself
And hard for friends to recognize.

But if you will inquire for my soul
You will find it
Always at the same address.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BROADWAY, OUR LITERARY SIGNPOST

By Kenneth Andrews

With Sketches by the Author

CLEMENCE DANE'S "Will Shakespeare" is not only one of the most pleasing of plays, it is also one of the most unusual which has yet appeared in this season of experiment and novelty. And of all the playwrights who have resorted to eccentric methods Miss Dane seems to have been most successful in accomplishing her purpose. Since she is a workwoman of integrity, part of that purpose was to disguise her play's eccentricity. She was so successful in this that the chorus who stand ready to acclaim the bizarre did not even realize that anything bizarre had appeared.

Here is a play which tells no story, in which the central figure is only vaguely delineated, and in which the viewpoint of the dramatist changes three distinct times. What more extraordinary assault on the conventions of orthodox drama could be devised? Yet no other method could have invested the story of Will Shakespeare with the haunting charm which this play has. It is a play of mood and suggestion and poetry. The dramatist provides atmosphere, the vague outlines of a story, and the still more vague outlines of a man. The verse and events on the stage may stimulate the spectator to fill in the outlines according to his fancy, as a well played symphony might do. They may fail to do this, and if so the play will fail. But it is indeed a remarkable experiment in stage writing.

You never have a full front view of Shakespeare himself. You remember him with his face somewhat averted, you are never sure — or at least are never told directly — what kind of person he is. That is the only way this man of a thousand legends could be satisfactorily placed upon the stage. Everyone who would care to see a play about Shakespeare has his own idea of what he was like. A literal image of him would be certain to do violence to everyone's image but the playwright's own. So Miss Dane has contrived, with quite astonishing ingenuity, to fashion her play so that anyone may read in his own conception of Shakespeare, and the materialization of certain accepted events of his life merely throws a mellower glamour over him. That is all the playwright tried to do, and she was wise.

We see this Will Shakespeare always through the eyes of others, through the eyes of three women who played their vital part in shaping his life. One of them loved him, another was amused by him, the other saw in him the genius which might add glory to her crown. Each of them made him suffer — and write. Thus we have indirectly suggested three sides of his character from which a coherent and acceptable Shakespeare may or may not emerge.

Anne Hathaway sees him through the eyes of love. To her he is a man

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

who is dismally tired of her. He is her husband, the father of her child yet to be born. Her simple, tortured mind is only bewildered and distressed

KATHARINE CORNELL
After seeing her as Mary Fitton one may read Shakespeare's sonnets with a new understanding and sympathy.

by those ambitions which carry his thoughts away from Stratford to London. Through her eyes we see a perverse, self-absorbed person, indifferent and a little cruel and terrible.

But in London we have a different angle, this time through the eyes of the radiant Mary Fitton. We see him now as an eager young lover, not cruel or terrible at all, but uncouth and a bit contemptible; and in the end annoying and impossible.

Through the eyes of Elizabeth, as we view him next, he is a promising young scribbler, unaware of his great powers, more engrossed in the capricious Mary than in those dreams he has followed so ardently. He is no genius perhaps, but one of those most worth patronage now that the great Kit Marlowe is dead. He is precipitate and intractable, but Elizabeth exerts her resolute will to sacrifice his throbbing young life to her ambitions; and she succeeds.

Miss Dane does it all blithely. Through harmonies of color and sound her play grows. She touches the curiously blurred and remote events with color and a certain tart romance, and that is all. To accuse her of heresy in creating an irresolute weakling is preposterous; and you would suppose that to call her Shakespeare another result of modern feminism would be too quaint even for a New York critic.

You have the feeling after seeing "Johannes Kreisler" that a cumbersome and noisy steam shovel has been clawing away all evening in the effort to bring to light a beautiful, but rather tiny, pearl. You are so engrossed with the machinery that you almost forget about the pearl. Nothing in the story that is told could be half so exciting as the suspense one feels while Ben-Ami, one of the most promising of the country's young actors, is being lowered by means of shaky block and tackle from a lofty niche in the scenery to the stage.

It is to be hoped, however, that the mechanical difficulties may have been overcome by this time, because even through the creaking and grinding which accompanied the early performances something of the wistful charm of the play was discernible. It is a fragile and exotic piece and deserved a better fate than it met at the Apollo Theatre; but one's sympathy for its sponsors can be only half-hearted. There was slight justification for the attempt to make of this delicate play a sensational novelty. Even under the best of conditions the wisdom of such a course would be questionable, we should think. It is, really, a pensive little story, told in retrospect. From its gentler qualities

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it must, under any circumstances, derive its charm. It demanded an atmosphere of placid romance to which involved stage machinery could scarcely contribute much, however well oiled it might be. Those much advertised forty-one scenes are merely so many glimpses of old Johannes Kreisler's past life, glimpses of his half mad soul. They are the memory pictures he has, as an old man, at once softened and unnaturally intensified by distance. On the last evening of his life Kreisler bares his bitter-sweet memories to a friend, and the incidents in his tale are the scenes which take shape in the blackness of the stage. A play much more robust might be mangled if the "flashback" technique were tried; only under most exceptional circumstances could "Johannes Kreisler" survive it.

It is the purpose of the playwrights to do more than rehearse the events in a musician's life; they propose to take us into the realm of his fancy that we may view his adventures as his disordered mind viewed them. Beauty, for Kreisler, was a constant, absolute thing. At different times in his life three different women seemed to embody his ideal, but for him it was always the same woman, though she existed nowhere save in his fancy. His inner life, as we come to know it through the unfolding of his tale, was a passionate quest for the beauty he could never have. The old man's saddened memory floods with florid color the episodes which for him are unforgetable. What actually happened and what happened only in his fevered dreams naturally become confused as his mind retraces his journey. Thus after Julia, his first love, has been forced to go to the convent Kreisler's too volatile fancy plays tricks on him. We see his dream. The cross in the convent has become a whipping post, the priest is lashing Julia's quivering back, the monks, now become imps, gloat over the torture.

Such is the scheme of the play: the real and the unreal constantly fuse, as they might in the faulty recollection of an old artist. It is a unique scheme but not a sensational one. We should suppose that any producer (or any playwright) would realize that only the most delicate and unobtrusive staging could bring out its values. Still the undertaking was an ambitious and praiseworthy one, carried out with that zeal to do finer things which seems to have seized the Selwyns. It deserves success. The appeal which the production would have, if it could be smoothly given, would be something distinctly fresh in the theatre. It tries, at least, to break new ground.

Mr. Belasco has done with "The Merchant of Venice" just what Mr. Belasco would do with it. What he set out to do, he did well; and David Warfield has ably abetted him. The quality in Warfield's Shylock which is most striking is, we think, its modesty. It is a modesty that is closely akin to mere good taste; a modesty that is found rarely, and scarcely ever in the work of actors whose names are as profitable as Warfield's. For Warfield never lets his Shylock, vivid and insistent as the old man is, become more important than the play. He seems to be one of the few actors who are able to regard a Shakespearian play as a play rather than as a rich part which will enable them to have the stage and the whole theatre to themselves for at least a third of the evening. His conception of Shylock, literally speaking, is in all probability not Shakespeare's. But it is, in all probability, as close to Shakespeare's conception as would be practicable on a modern stage. He

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wrote for a public which despised the Jew as frankly as H. L. Mencken despises a Rotarian. Shakespeare, himself, wasted precious little sympathy on Shylock. The old man's misery was not designed to rouse pity, it was tossed in with a generous hand to feed the race hatred of his public. It was good hokum, not much more. Warfield softens this aspect of the part somewhat, but he does not try to soften it too much. He keeps Shylock a human suffering person, but also a little contemptible. This modification of the part as written is entirely proper, it merely takes into account the greater tolerance of a modern audience; and an audience today sees in a Shylock, thus modified, much the same Shylock that the Elizabethan audience saw.

It is too much to say that only a great actor could create such a Shylock, but it is true that only a modest and exceptionally intelligent actor could. "The Merchant of Venice", as we have it here, is by no means a tragedy; nor is it a trial scene melodrama. The shadow of Shylock's despair seems to fall with comforting contrast across a sunlit scene. His woes serve to add depth and more poignant excitement to a drama of carnival, romance, and love. The play, as presented this time, leads quite smoothly through richly embroidered scenes to Belmont and "a garden to the House of Portia". We do not need to tell you what Belasco did with this garden. Moonlight sleeps on this bank as never before in all the long, long gallery. It is lamentably old-fashioned, of course, but it is a beautiful stage picture despite the fact that it does resemble a garden. As a picture it dominates all that has gone before. The scene among the lovers rises with it and it too dominates what has preceded, becomes the natural end to the story, the conclusion toward which all else has tended.

Warfield's Shylock is woven like a stripe of bold yet harmonious color through this story. In retrospect it seems surprising that he did succeed

BEN-AMI
In "Johannes Kreisler" he demonstrates again that he is one of the upper two or three in the actor's profession.

with such grace in blending Shylock into this typically Belasco interpretation. His performance is naturally what one remembers from the production but, in a sense, one remembers it as a gratifying contributory factor in the movement of the love story. Shylock, in Warfield's hands, is not noble. He is no prophet. He is as distraught over the loss of his ducats as he is over the loss of his daughter. That is the way Shakespeare wrote him, and Warfield does not slur a single undignified line. Shylock fights desperately for his pound of flesh, not to revenge his race, but as a distracted old merchant

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

who has been harried and prodded past endurance. It is purely a personal grudge. His fantastic vengeance even seems comprehensible. His gradually mounting hysteria has been all too clearly revealed in scene after scene. We do not sympathize with him (and should not do so), but we understand the torture he endures, we understand thoroughly why he squirms and snarls at his tormentors. At the end of the trial scene, when he lies at the feet of his peers, shorn of all his treasures, he is not a tragic person, he is only forlorn and wretched. Which is as it should be, we venture to say. After this he may pass out of the picture quite naturally, so that the lovers in Belmont may look at the moon unmolested.

One wonders, after all, if this is not the way to produce Shakespeare. The plays are compounded of word music and pictures. So Shakespeare imagined them, so his hearers were able to imagine them, since their free fancy had never been debauched by modern lights and scenery. There was nothing on their stage save a few stark symbols to stimulate their fancy. But stark symbols do not stimulate fancy today. They thwart and starve it. And even a Belasco scene is only suggestive. Imagination can begin — at least in most cases — where even Belasco's carpenters leave off. Also Shakespeare wrote in the heroic mood. His characters are greatly magnified, according to the heroic tradition. His lines are not talk, they are vigorous poetry. To press out of Shakespeare's people their heroic quality, to reduce them to actual size, to rob their lines of music is surely to take away most of the magic.

A lofty curtain flashing and shimmering in the light, three bare steps which seem to grow larger and larger, a flustered actress pawing her way in and out of the curtain and climbing up and down the steps over and over again: such is the impression one gets of Ethel Barrymore in "Romeo and Juliet". It would be unjust to blame Miss Barrymore for this incredible

THE DRAMA SHELF

"Fashions for Men and The Swan" by Franz Molnar (Boni, Liveright). The two plays might be said to represent two extremes of this author's craft. "The Swan" is a somewhat belated satire of the king business which, in some respects, suggests "Liliom". "Fashions for Men" does not suggest "Liliom".

"The Fool" by Channing Pollock (Brentano). The play which caused the dramatic critic of the New York "Herald" to weep. It is Mr. Pollock's masterpiece.

"The Little Country Theater" by Alfred G. Arvold (Macmillan). The story of the little theatre of the North Dakota Agricultural College, meant as an object lesson and guide to those contemplating similar ventures.

"How to Produce Amateur Plays" by Barrett H. Clark (Little, Brown). A revised edition of this serviceable handbook.

"A Book of Plays" by Wittner Bynner (Knopf). Four one act plays, one of which will shock the life out of you if you are not familiar with amateur one act plays.

"The Drama in Transition" by Isaac Goldberg (Stewart Kidd). An exhaustive survey of "new" tendencies in drama as manifested in Spain, Italy, South America, France, Germany, in Yiddish drama, Russia, and Greenwich Village.

"Moscow Art Theatre Plays" (Brentano). "Tsar Fyodor Ivanovitch" by Tolstoy; "The Lower Depths" by Gorky; "The Cherry Orchard", "The Three Sisters", and "Uncle Vanya" by Chekhov.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

production. Again and again there were moments when it seemed that she might overcome the handicap which those appallingly incongruous stage sets placed upon her. She does not look like Juliet, of course, but dozens of actresses who looked no more like her have created quite competent Juliets from the poetry of Shakespeare's lines — as the playwright expected her to be created. An actress less sensitively attuned to the mood of the playhouse before her might have made you forget the massive carpentry which loomed grotesquely above her. But her art is too finely drawn to withstand such pressure. It was a distressing defeat for Shakespeare and Miss Barrymore, a triumph for Robert Edmond Jones.

In "The Tidings Brought to Mary" Lee Simonson wins an even greater victory than Jones, because in this case there is no Barrymore and scarcely any play to distract attention from the bleak stage and colored lights.

"Why Not?" by Jesse Lynch Williams which the Equity Players offered as their third production did not have the benefit of an out-of-town grooming, and it sadly needed a hair cut, manicure, and face massage when it made its bow to New York. Even in its disheveled state, however, it seemed to be a play of decided promise. It is, in its best moments, a gay satire on the idiocies of the divorce law and it takes some snappy cracks at the church as well. Some of the author's witticisms are pretty deliberate, and he proves nothing of any great consequence, but it is the best thing the Equity Players have ever done.

In seeing the Moscow Art Theatre one realizes again (as in the case of "La Chauve-Souris") how any barrier between play and audience, even that of language, may fall away before the warm illusion which comes when there is unity of purpose and thorough conviction on the part of the actors. Tolstoy's characters in "Tsar Fyodor Ivanovitch" do come to vigorous life in the hands of this remarkable company of players. The lines they speak must fall on uncomprehending ears, but the drama of their naked souls is understandable enough. The company provides a novel theatrical experience; it is, perhaps, unfortunate that it can do no more than that.

"Secrets" supplies the personable and competent Margaret Lawrence with the sort of part that actresses like better than anyone else. "The Egotist" is exactly the play Mr. Ditrichstein would select. "Rose Briar" makes one wonder if Mr. Tarkington, after all, was wise when he gave up collaborating. "The Clinging Vine" is an extremely amusing play with music and Peggy Wood. "It is the Law", a murder thriller based on numerous implausibilities, is successful in making you accept them as long as necessary. It is an ingenious nerveracker and ends with a twist calculated to trip up any lawyer in town.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE LONDONER

New Letters of the Great Earl of Chesterfield---The Farington Diary---A W. H. Hudson Memorial---Publishers---A Bad Habit of Some American Publishers---"La Garconne"---Huxley First Editions and a Waggish Bookseller---Wilfrid Ewart.

LONDON, *January* 1, 1923.

PROBABLY the book which has attracted most attention during the past year is one which made its appearance during the last few days before Christmas. I refer to the Farington Diary. This book has made the year memorable, and its history is suitably romantic. It is almost too good to be true, and yet the truth of the story is unquestionable. But there have been several such strange histories within living memory, and I was hearing the other day of one no less remarkable that is not yet public property. I will mention the latter first, because it happened in a similar way and may serve to whet the appetites of readers for the Farington story which follows. A friend of mine who is well known in the world of antiques and art dealers recently had occasion to go through a vast pile of old papers which were found in an ancient chest. He is a man with an eye and a nose for good things and authentic things. And as he made his careful examination of the papers he caught a word here and there and a signature or so, and, his suspicions roused, he began to put in order what he found. The collection proved to be nothing less than a complete series of letters, of the most intimate and truly remarkable character, from the great Earl of Chesterfield. They supplied a full course of advice to a young man going abroad — an astounding addition to the possible classics of deportment, and also to the classics of letter writing. The Earl of Chesterfield's Letters have been so famous, and have given such unsurpassed entertainment to those who study such things, that they have become a byword. And now their number is augmented by I do not know how many more, marked with the same cynicism, the same extraordinary genteel wisdom. It is a find of very great importance.

Something very similar has occurred with the Farington Diary. One of the partners in Messrs. Puttick and Simpson, the famous auctioneers, was inspecting the contents of a house, and found in an attic a considerable quantity of manuscript. The manuscript was put up to auction, and a member of the staff of the "Morning Post" noticed its interest and value. On his advice the editor of the "Morning Post" bid for the manuscript and was fortunate enough to buy the whole of it for something just over a hundred pounds. Months ago friends of mine began to talk of a diary which was appearing serially in the "Morning Post", and at last I was made curious. I read some of the instalments, and it was evident that this was a most remarkable discovery. The interest of it grows with the development of the book; for so large a mass of raw material has not been discovered for many years. Farington was

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an English painter who lived through the last half of the eighteenth century and for the first twenty-one years of the nineteenth century. The member of a Lancashire family, he lived in London from 1780, and from 1793 he kept a diary. It was continued until his death. In his time he was a very powerful man, well known as an artist, and the friend of artists; and he was even the so called "dictator" of the Royal Academy. In addition, he had an extensive general acquaintance, knew people in all walks of life, and, best of all, was a gossip. He was a gossip, moreover, during one of the most interesting periods of English history. The public men of the day, Pitt, Fox, Burke, and those of a later date; the artists, from Gainsborough to Turner — these are people who are already pictured for us in history and in other memoirs. But we shall not easily tire of writers who tell us of those whom they knew from personal contact. We shall still eagerly read that most intimate form of biography and history which the diary supplies. What would we not give for another Pepys? Even for another Evelyn? Imagine the joys of the Creevey Papers, the Greville Memoirs, the Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox. Personally I take the greatest delight in the "Records of a Girlhood" and its sequels, by Fanny Kemble. These are books about real people, about famous people, seen from close at hand. Can there be a more engrossing sort of history? I think not. And the discovery of the Farington diary, which is to take several volumes more before it comes to its end, is one of the things which rouses the high hopes of the literary adventurer. If the Chesterfield letters are published, as I hope they may be, we shall have yet another priceless addition to our knowledge of the eighteenth century. Meanwhile we have this copious and informative diary of Farington's, and can look forward to the further volumes with fine expectation. It will do very well to go on with; and must be treasured for its own sake. I do not suppose that these memoirs will materially affect our estimates of the historic persons with whom they deal; but they will add to and modify our knowledge, and they have this extraordinary interest, that they were written over a long period, by one who had personal opportunities of learning the truth about all sorts of social happenings, and by one who was little likely to be led astray by popular verdicts. A mere résumé of the contents of the book would be enough to indicate its qualities. I have not space for that. But the first volume covers the ten years from 1793 to 1802, and this fact alone will be enough proof of the book's comprehensiveness and importance.

* * * *

I see that there is to be a memorial to the late W. H. Hudson. The idea of it originates, I believe, with his old friend R. B. Cunninghame Graham, and the committee is influential. It consists of Muirhead Bone, J. M. Dent, Gerald Duckworth, Miss L. Gardiner, Edward Garnett, Viscountess Grey of Fallodon, Holbrook Jackson, H. J. Massingham, and Mrs. Reginald McKenna. The objects of the committee are to erect a drinking and bathing place for birds in connection with a bird sanctuary in one of the Royal Parks of London, and to present William Rothenstein's portrait of Hudson to the National Portrait Gallery. The Honorable Treasurer is Hugh R. Dent. A first list of subscribers has been issued, from which it is clear that the memorial will be

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

something ambitious and permanent. The committee consists of one artist, three bird lovers, two journalists and critics, and two publishers who no doubt must be counted as both bird lovers and lovers of Hudson. I am glad to see publishers interesting themselves in so humane a cause.

* * * *

Publishers are a much cursed section of the human species, and yet they are often very sensitive and generous people. I think they suffer in the estimation of authors because the authors have commercial relations with them. A great many authors are not good business men, but they are very suspicious men. They are very cowardly and acute in their penetration of the baseness of other men. They think much of small things, and they know that the publishers are in business for the purpose of making money out of the work of authors. I myself have had personal and business relations with quite a number of publishers, and I believe they are maligned. Their mentality is not as mine; they are more naïve as a class than authors; and they seek their own advantage more innocently and simply than authors are in the habit of doing. An author, if he be a good author, sets his work above his financial rewards — taking as much care as he can that his financial rewards shall be duly forthcoming when they are deserved — but a publisher, being in business, must make up his mind whether there is going to be any profit in a transaction, or whether it is going to result in a loss. He takes his risks, sometimes stupidly, sometimes not, and he has to abide by the result. But he naturally cares more about his own profit than about the author's. He feels injured out of all proportion to the needs of the case if the author shows a grasping disposition. He is wounded. This is a thing which no author can ever understand. He cannot understand that most publishers are more naïve than most authors. He thinks them cunning. That is the author's naïveté.

While I am on the subject of publishers, let me say a few words about American publishers, and one of their ways. I wish my words to carry far. I wish them to carry right across the Atlantic Ocean. The words are as follows: Certain American publishers, in their pride at publishing good books, launch review copies in the direction of one or two English newspapers, in particular the "Times Literary Supplement". These books arrive, and as they are good books — otherwise the publishers would not trouble to send them for attention — they are reviewed. Very well. So far, so good. But the publisher, either directly or through an agent, also submits these excellent books to English publishing firms. The English firms take them (I am still speaking only of the good books), and publish them in this country. Review copies are sent out to the press, particularly to, say, the "Times Literary Supplement". Instead of being noticed at length, as their quality demands, they are noticed briefly, with a note to the effect that they have *already been reviewed* in a past number. Now the importance of this matter is this: English publishers look upon the "Times Literary Supplement" as the one real trade organ in the literary world. It notices, or at least acknowledges, all the books that are published in England. It is used by booksellers as a record of new books, and — I am sorry to say — by some provincial reviewers as a touchstone of literary taste. When I say I am sorry for this I must not be

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

taken as reflecting upon the character of the reviews which appear in the "Times Literary Supplement". No reviews could be more disinterested, and if there is occasionally an objectionably well bred and well educated note in the paper this is inevitable, and not to be made a subject for complaint. What I meant was that some provincial reviewers feel certain of being right if they echo the "Times Literary Supplement". The paper thus has considerable power. I may exaggerate this, but I do not think so. Seeing, therefore, a brief reference only to this excellent American book in the "Times Literary Supplement", and not referring to a file, the provincial reviewer ignores or summarily dismisses the book in his own paper. The English publisher is grieved at the poor reception of the book, and the American publisher, so far from doing himself good by sending the book out across the seas in his ingenuous fashion, has harmed that book and his own business connection. Will American publishers please look at the matter again? They would greatly increase the entente with English publishers by refraining. Unless, of course, the interest of the book is so exclusively American that an English edition is not a possibility. I speak with several particular instances in mind, and not through my hat, as it may be imagined.

* * * *

We are getting here a sort of echo of the furious row that is going on in France at the present time over "La Garçonne". Many very respectable men are going about with copies of the book in their pockets, telling each other that it carries pornography to a higher pitch than anything else known to them, even in French. They discuss the action taken in France against the author of the book, and debate whether he was given his little ribbon of the Legion of Honor for military or artistic services to France. And what, pray, is the book about, that it should cause such a stir? It is about the postwar girl, if you will believe me; and it is probably pretty true in its details, but exaggerated in its application. That is to say, you can write a book about a certain *sort* of girl, and it will be true, and therefore quite proper to be written. But readers have not the same interest in types and in individuals as the artist, and they insist upon looking for universal applications. That, I take it, is the real ground of objection in France to "La Garçonne". Not to its suggested immorality, but to the fact that it seems to criticize the French woman as a national emblem. Perhaps it does so — in that case, the less artist Victor Margueritte. Probably it does not. Yet if the book is true, as I believe it to be, it is better upon every ground — even that of its enemies — that it should be permitted to exist than that it should be given the greatest possible free advertisement by all the fuss. The movement originated, I am told, in the refusal of Messrs. Hachette to exhibit the book upon their railway bookstalls. The firm was quite within its right. What followed has become international. What I wonder is, how long we are going to be shocked at the young girl. She is certainly doing at the present time a whole host of deplorable things, she is maniacally selfish, she is raffish, vicious, degenerate; but not all of her is bad. Not every example of her is even what I have said. In fact the girl who is regarded as the typical product of the age perhaps exists in small numbers. Besides which, the bad ones will be exter-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

minated by sheer physical exhaustion. What is all the fuss about?

* * * *

I heard an amusing story the other day about Aldous Huxley, which is perhaps worth repeating here. Huxley, it appears, has angered a certain dealer in second hand books. Now, it must be made clear that of all our young writers Huxley is perhaps the one whose first editions are most sought after. They quickly rise in price, and a few months after publication may be seen in the lists issued for collectors by second hand booksellers at considerably increased prices. Not, however, in the lists of the bookseller who has been angered by Huxley. In his lists, the works of Huxley do indeed figure, but instead of saying, as the other firms do,

HUXLEY, ALDOUS. Limbo. FIRST EDITION, Published
5s. net.....15s.

this man puts:

HUXLEY, ALDOUS. Limbo. FIRST EDITION, Published
5s. net...MY PRICE 4d.

The books, I am told, have not yet been secured by any eager seekers. When demanded, they have always been "sold". I draw attention to this curious jape, because it seems to open such a remarkable possibility. Once let any bookseller develop a feud with a well known writer, and he can carry on warfare upon a strange scale out of all proportion to the offense committed by the writer. I do not suppose the habit will become general. I have not yet seen:

PURE, SIMON. Spondulicks. FIRST EDITION, Published
7s. 6d. net....WORTH 2¼d.

It may come. Who could complain?

* * * *

The shooting of Wilfrid Ewart in Mexico is a sad end to a promising career. Beyond some journalism which was utilized in the production of a book on Irish affairs, he had written only one novel, but several people of good judgment had commended the book to me as a fine picture of the war at first hand. The introductory portions, depicting civilian life before the war, were generally regarded as less good, which was almost inevitable when one recalls what a hash many more experienced writers have made of that period and of the first sinister rumblings of conflict from the near east. I do not believe that we can yet recreate the atmosphere of the days immediately preceding the outbreak of the war. We see those days through our knowledge of what followed. My own recollections are of a very small garden in a suburban house near London, and an old man reading some article in the "Daily Chronicle", and wanting to argue about the abstract possibilities of war, and about the financial resources of the country. Nothing more. Children were playing near, and we were really more concerned with their play than with the possibilities of catastrophe. Strangely enough I was in Germany immediately before the war, and left the country only a week before the declaration. I arrived one hot day in the early summer, and caused myself to be taken, with a complete ignorance of German, to a hotel which had been recommended by another visitor. I reached the hotel, washed, lunched, and returned to the big entrance hall. The head waiter approached me bearing one of the little news bulletins which the German newspapers seem to issue instead of extra editions. He held it out. "No good," said I. "I can't read it. What does it say?" "It says", he answered, "that the Austrian Crown Prince is dead." Not "assassinated",

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

you understand. Just "dead". I had never heard of the Austrian Crown Prince. Later, on the return journey to England, I entered a railway carriage at Leipzig, and was addressed in German by the only other passengers — two men who were strangers to each other and who had been carrying on a conversation. I shook my head. "I'm English." "English!" they both shouted with joy. Both were Austrian, both Anglophils. "How did you like the Germans?" they asked. "They've been very kind to me." "Yes, to you. They *would* be. You're English. To us, no!" One of the men, who insisted upon playing the music of Wieniawski during the whole night on his violin, gave me a little elementary information about the Austrian Crown Prince. He did not think highly of him or of his political policy. It was all strange. Stranger still, washing it all out of my head, was the violin playing all night in the swaying train. Both men were music mad. One of them had a boy who had taken medals at the Royal College of Music in London. They talked music, music, music — not in a scholarly way, but with emotion, bad taste, wretched driveling enthusiasm for bad composers. When they were on the English boat I was able to give a tiny return for their kindness, but no more. We were separated. I saw them no more. A week later perhaps I might not have been allowed to leave Germany, yet what a treat the holiday had been to me, alone in a strange land, knowing nothing whatever of the language, being taken by all the wandering children for a native and therefore being pestered with questions which I could not answer. Then the war. Well, I certainly could not attempt to improvise a description of London at that time. It wouldn't come.

Is it any wonder that Ewart did not succeed in convincing those who read his book? It was impossible to tell from that book what he would have done in literature. My own view is that he might have found it impossible to keep up with the novel. He had had burning experiences — well, they turned, or were turned, into material for a close study of life in time of war. But such experiences are not again to be endured with the same electric responsiveness. It is impossible to say. That he was seeking in Mexico material for another novel shows that he realized how necessary it was for him to get material of a kind to stimulate him. Ordinary life very likely had no appeal for him. The "Times" obituary notice alluded to an abruptness of manner due to shyness, which the writer associated with modesty. Shyness is generally associated with arrogance. Abruptness is generally a sign of the same quality. At any rate, those who are shy and abrupt are not generally so equipped as to make common cause with the more ordinary of their fellow creatures. I should be inclined to suggest that the novelist is of all men the one who can least afford to be shy and abrupt. If he is not at once at ease in any company he is probably handicapped for his task, which is the understanding of ordinary humans. He may of course be a born poet, but he would seem to me not to be a born novelist. You see, it is the *interest* of the whole business that stimulates the novelist, and given an interest in anything I do not quite see how one can be constrained in its presence. Naturally these remarks are not intended to cast any reflections upon Ewart, whom I never met. But I have met a friend of his, whose manners are certainly not those of a born novelist.

SIMON PURE

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE LITERARY SPOTLIGHT

XVII: *FLOYD DELL*

With a Caricature by William Gropper

BERGSON has pictured the life of humanity as a sort of wave, rushing ahead, over or through every obstacle. It is a cheering picture, and whenever I visualize it strongly I seem to see Floyd Dell riding on the topmost crest.

Or, if you prefer, you may think of him as a small boy running ahead of the parade — and always knowing intuitively which corner the parade is going to turn.

His own early life is more or less given to us in his first novel. He was born, in fact, near Davenport, Iowa, he did work in a candy factory, then on a newspaper — from which he was discharged not for his own shortcomings but because the house which the proprietor gave his daughter for a wedding present cost more than the estimate and necessitated retrenchment — and he did leave Davenport for Chicago, where he obtained a job as a reporter on the "Evening Post".

Intellectually, the Dell of those days is pretty much the Dell of today. In other ways — in emotional attitudes and what we may roughly call ethics — there has been a vast change. Soon after he joined the "Post", Francis Hackett became editor of the Friday Literary Review and Dell became his associate. That was in 1909 and I met him soon after. I had read some of his reviews, and imagined their author as a leisurely, rather elderly and very wise gentleman writing them in a quiet room in his club. Dell personally gave anything but that impression. He was exceedingly young looking, shy looking — but that vanished when he began to speak — thin, fair, with hair rather long in front, and a slight stoop. In short, he looked appealing rather than distinguished.

In a sense it is, doubtless, beside the point to write about his earlier days — for has he not recently confessed that he has been psychoanalyzed and that it has made a new person of him? That should mean, of course, that his past is dead — and it would be rather ungracious to dig it up and confront his new self with it. At least the reader may be warned not to try to interpret the present Floyd Dell in the light of such ancient history as I may resuscitate. That past seems to have been actually forgotten by the new Floyd Dell — when I recounted to him some anecdotes of his old Chicago life he was bewildered and incredulous. "Was I really like that?" he asked. And when I assured him it was so, he remarked: "No wonder people hated me."

To say that people "hated" him would not quite be true. Some of them liked him loyally enough; but they were the ones who had an opportunity of knowing him intimately, and were aware that he did not deliberately seek — as some others supposed — to make himself disagreeable. But, though he did not try, the fact is that

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he succeeded. He came to Chicago at a time when that city — and all America — was still under the régime of a polite reticence about all sorts of facts which have since then forced their way even into parlor conversation. Dell seemed unaware of these conventions — and he continually shattered them, in speech and in writing. Times have changed, and perhaps Floyd Dell would not seem so terrible a young man to Chicago today. But terrible he did seem then. He had, as his friends knew, a deep regard for truth — for truth as he saw it — and a youthful insensitiveness to other people's feelings. Perhaps he was unaware that other people had feelings — he was frequently accused of having none of his own. Perhaps he gave other people credit for the same kind of impersonal enthusiasm for truth that he himself possessed. At any rate, the combination was sometimes devastating, and it is not to be wondered at that in some quarters he was regarded as a highly offensive personage whose brilliancy only increased his objectionableness. It is possible that, immersed in his own world of ideas and surrounded by a few friends of his own sort, he was never quite conscious that he was living in a provincial and prudish middle western town: it is sufficient to say, in this connection, that he not only talked and wrote but lived as though he were a denizen of the Abbey of Thélème whose rule is "Do what you will".

How, in view of these circumstances, he ever gained a journalistic position which enabled him to annoy, shock, and outrage the sensibilities of his respectable fellow citizens, is somewhat of a mystery. It may have been that his journalistic abilities were of the sort that inevitably command recognition. Just how good a reporter he was, I really do not know. The only story of his I remember seeing was one he wrote on a birthday of John Milton. He looked up all the contemporary John Miltons in the telephone directory and went out and interviewed them — with especial reference to their occupations, which were usually quite non-poetic.

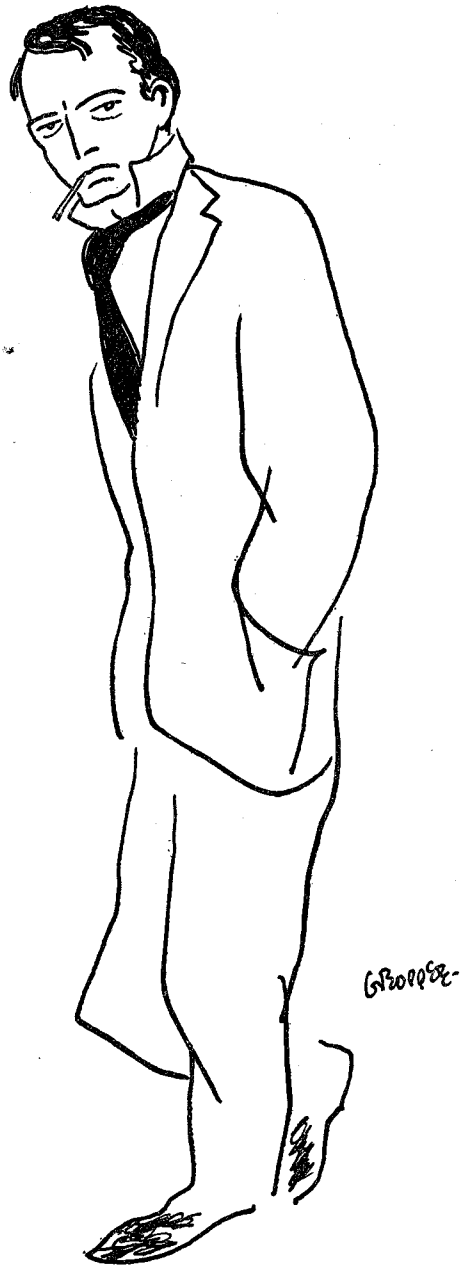
But his personality began to emerge and his popularity and unpopularity to grow when he became associate editor of the Friday Literary Review of the "Post" — and then its editor, when Francis Hackett left to write that novel for which we are still waiting. Dell had a flat in a suburb and he used to invite us out there to hear his friend Arthur Davison Ficke read his poems. Later I introduced him to the late George Burman Foster, who taught comparative religion in the University of Chicago, and who was indeed the greatest theological scholar in the country. But behind the theological scholar was a rebel, and Foster and Dell got on splendidly — even when Floyd's tendency to *épater le bourgeois* shocked all Foster's other guests.

On one occasion one of the guests was a local artist who painted landscapes of a very sentimental quality and liked to talk about "art". This artist had been asked to give a little talk to his fellow guests on art — and he had complied, with some abysmally silly remarks. Floyd Dell had come in late, and sat inconspicuously by the door. The artist ended his talk by offering to answer any questions. Dell, in dulcet tones, said he would like to ask one. The artist with a benevolent gesture signified that he might.

Dell: "What is the difference between art and apple butter?"

It may seem strange, to anyone who

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Floyd Dell

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

has never known the Chicago of that date, that this disrespectful question should have created so much consternation. Dell might as well deliberately have taken a vase from the mantelpiece, said "I don't like this", and smashed it on the hearth. It was a thing that was positively *not done*. It established Dell as rude, insulting, egotistic, unprincipled, and dangerous. And it may be imagined what an innocent remark on the subject of sex — such as would pass fairly unnoted even in conservative circles in these Freudian days — it may be imagined, I say, what social havoc such a remark would create, with what a gasp it would be greeted, with what an embarrassing silence it would be followed, and how it would be whispered afterward into a multitude of horrified ears!

Dell seems to have forgotten, but he must have enjoyed these situations. At all events, he created them. But it is probably true that his intention was not so much to shock the bourgeoisie as to let the bourgeoisie know that its ideas profoundly shocked him. He was, in fact, quite natural and simple in all his social contacts. And he was in those days still naïve enough to think that he could show the bourgeoisie by a little cold logic just how shocking it was.

His naturalness irritated even Professor Foster on one occasion. He and Dell were both on an ambitious program designed to celebrate something in connection with Robert Browning — his centenary, I think. Anyway it was a very boring occasion, until it was very unexpectedly enlivened by Dell. Professor Foster, being a philosopher by trade, had to speak of Browning as a philosopher — and he made out a good case. But making the best of a bad job was too pragmatic a concept to find lodgment in Dell's mind. When he was called upon — his subject being Browning as a dramatist — he impetuously launched an attack upon Foster's argument: "I disagree utterly with Professor Foster. Browning was not a philosopher at all. There is more philosophy in one page of Shaw than there is in all of Browning. . . ." and so forth, with some ridicule for the philosophy of "God's in his heaven; all's right with the world". But Dell made up to the Browningites present, if not to the Fosterites — for there were more people there who came to hear Foster than there were readers of Browning — by his excellent defense of Browning as a dramatic poet.

Although some people are now affecting to think of Chicago as the literary capital of America, there seems — to an occasional visitor at least — nothing in the city today quite like that little society which grouped itself around Floyd Dell. There was George Cram Cook, now the director of the Provincetown Players, who was then known to a small circle as a novelist. Dell had met him in Davenport and for a year or so had been in partnership with him in a truck farm. They had had a terrible struggle. Their vision of living from the farm and having leisure for literary work faded very soon. They tried to fight insects and frosts but their methods were inadequate. If it is true, as Cook's friends say, that he is the laziest man in America, that truck farm is to blame for it. And even Floyd was never able to finish his first novel until after being psychoanalyzed, although whether memories of the truck farm showed up at all in the analysis he has never told me. Then Charles Hallinan, an editorial writer on the "Post", was a member of the group,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as were Lucian and Augusta Cary — who succeeded Dell as literary editors of the "Post" — and Llewellyn Jones, then a contributor to the Friday Review and now its editor. There was Margaret Anderson, too, then literary editor of the "Continent", a Presbyterian paper not at all like "The Little Review" which she now so ably captains. Sherwood Anderson was, toward the last, one of this group, and it may be said — in fact, Sherwood Anderson does say it — that Floyd Dell was his "discoverer"; at least, Dell was the first person who knew what literature is who recognized and hailed him as a writer. In fact, when Dell left Chicago for New York he took with him the manuscript of Anderson's first novel, "Windy McPherson's Son", and tried vainly for several months to find a publisher for it — and at last found one in England, who made arrangements for its publication by the American branch of the house. Theodore Dreiser, on his visits to Chicago, was a familiar in the group; and so was Vachel Lindsay, as yet unknown to fame, on his visits from Springfield. Carl Sandburg, also as yet unknown as a poet, was occasionally present. And the Little Theatre company, and their director, Maurice Browne, were part of the group as well.

This group, held together by their common love of art and ideas, gradually disintegrated as one after another left town. The émigrés outnumber those who have remained. Dell was among those who went to New York. He became one of the editors of "The Masses", a radical and art magazine, lived in Greenwich Village, and for several years devoted his leisure to writing and producing one act plays. They were first presented at the Liberal Club in Greenwich Village, and in a sense these plays initiated the contemporary little theatre movement in New York. For one of the offshoots of the Liberal Club theatre was the Washington Square Players' organization, which gave birth in turn to the Provincetown Players company and the Theatre Guild. Besides writing and producing plays, Dell amused himself by organizing the earliest of those Greenwich Village balls which, together with other Greenwich Village activities in which he had his due share, presently advertised the Village so thoroughly to all America that the sons and daughters of the bourgeoisie flocked in by the thousands seeking "freedom", and the original inhabitants of the Village fled to the suburbs — Dell among them. It was a time of play, brought to an end by the war and perhaps also by the fact that after a time nothing becomes so tiresome as pleasure. It was at this period that Dell simultaneously discovered that life is real, life is earnest, and that Freud is its prophet. He was "psyched", became the husband of B. Marie Gage, settled down, and wrote his first novel.

Just how much he has changed as a result of his psychoanalytic conversion is a question. His intellectual passions and curiosities remain the same — on the one hand a disinterested devotion to pure (and hence useless) beauty, and on the other hand a strangely utilitarian kind of social idealism. He is ready to uphold Prohibition, or even to have smoking (he smokes cigarettes continuously) abolished by law, on grounds of efficiency. But his emotional nature has apparently undergone some real change, not entirely for the worse. What his complexes were I have not asked him, but psychoanalysis seems to have straightened out the kinks, and made

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it possible not only for him to write his novels but to find happiness in life. And because Freud has been accused so often of breaking up homes, it may be of interest to note that its effect in this instance seems to be in the direction of a more conservative attitude toward sex. Indeed, Dell seems to some of his friends unduly sensitive to — or perhaps he is merely bored by — jokes on the subject; at any rate he fails to find any amusement in the kind of Rabelaisian anecdotes for which most of his fellow human beings have a genial weakness. If that is the result of psychoanalysis, it seems rather a pity!

Since some of his acquaintances of earlier days have looked upon him as an idle jester, and still others as a dangerous social radical, it would be desirable, if it were possible, to explain in just what ways he has changed. He is still some kind of Socialist, and might perhaps be called a conservative Bolshevik. During the war both aspects of this conservative radicalism were in evidence. He was an editor of "The Masses", a magazine which opposed the war, but in another Socialist magazine, "The New Review", he wrote attacking German imperialism in terms which left nothing to be desired by the most ardent patriot. He was indicted, along with the other editors of "The Masses", for criticizing the government. The specific crime charged against him was writing an article in defense of conscientious objectors; and yet when he was himself drafted for military service he did not become a conscientious objector. He was actually sent back from a training camp to be tried a second time for his defense of conscientious objectors! Dell himself explains that he was "a little muddled". But I think he has a genuine streak of conservatism and an equally genuine streak of radicalism in his nature, and that his actions were perfectly consonant with this mixed temperament. He has a real passion for freedom of utterance, and would see nothing absurd in going to jail in behalf of the right to praise conduct which he himself had no desire to emulate. The puzzled jury found itself unable, in two trials, to decide that he was a menace to the Republic. Then the armistice came, and the indictment was dismissed — and he was left at peace to devote himself to his real work, the writing of novels.

With the publication of his first novel, "Moon-Calf", some of his friends were surprised to find no trace of the ardent rebel, the stringent social critic that they knew, in its pages. The rebel, the social critic, appears it is true in the person of the hero, Felix Fay — but the novel seemed to be rather a criticism of him than a justification. This impression was strengthened by the second novel, "The Briary-Bush", in which the same hero, after trying out various modern experiments in conduct, comes at last to accept certain established conventions — particularly the convention of marriage in its most old-fashioned sense.

This impression, taken together with the fact that the author, after (or so it is rumored) a somewhat hectic and ultramodern emotional career, is now enjoying an old-fashioned happy domesticity at Croton-on-Hudson, with his wife and son Anthony — plus the fact that he is said to appear on social occasions in conventional dinner clothes — has caused some of his acquaintances (especially some of that younger generation to whom his name was, along with those of Dreiser and Mencken, a shibboleth of radicalism) to mourn for him as a lost soul. They

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would not be surprised to hear that he had voted for Harding and joined the local Rotary Club. His old friend Dreiser, meeting him recently, gave expression to these current notions, saying sardonically, "I hear you have become reconciled to Church and State." Dell merely grinned in reply.

When an author has the good fortune to be damned as conservative, it is rather too bad to spoil the illusion. But Dell's novels really do not justify the notion that he has gone over to the Old Guard. They are not propaganda, it is true; they are written from a point of view from which ideas of any sort, modern or old-fashioned, are in themselves of no fundamental significance, representing as they do merely some of the outward guises of human emotion. It is with these human emotions, as contemporary life serves to illustrate them, that the novels deal; and perhaps the author of them has done a real, if unappreciated, service to the cause of modernism by showing how very powerful indeed are the impulses with which that modernism must contend, and how frail are the intellectual plans of young modernists in comparison with the immemorial instincts of the human herd — of which they are, as they sooner or later find, themselves a part.

SPRING AND THE ANGEL

By Charles Hanson Towne

IT was that time of year when green things grow
As if by grace, all over the jubilant earth;
That time of budding tree, ascending grass
And fragrant lanes when hawthorn blossoms break,
And orchards first put on their delicate tints.
April! Another April over the land,
With soft rains summoning the laggard troops
Of hyacinths and early primroses.
April! with birds that call from blowing branches
The news that heaven has kissed the waking earth,
And roused to sudden rapture beauty that slept.
How diligent the army of the flowers!
In beautiful battalions, lo! I saw
Their ranks of colored uniforms appear
And march in splendor down the singing hills.

II

Now who could weary of the budding boughs,
Though thrice ten million stretched their flowery arms,
As if to bless the earth?

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There was in heaven
An angel who leaned down when Spring had come,
As if to drink the perfume of the world
In one long draught, so eager was his soul
For the old wonder that he knew when life
Upon the hills was one long cry of youth.
The streets of jasper and of fabled pearl,
High golden gates and fields of asphodel
Were wearisome to him. The storied towers
Filled him with languor. "Lord, I crave the Spring —
The earthly Spring that wakens now below,
And I would fare to woods grown green again,
To river banks where mosses kiss the water,
And shy birds call when sap begins to run.
I hunger for the lost delight that poured
In sunlight on one dear remembered hill.
I pine for the scent of lilacs wet with rain;
Oh, I am homesick for the fragrant earth!"

III

Then God released him from the shining streets,
And straightway down the stairway of the sun
This anxious spirit fled, and softly reached,
(Unknown to man), the meadows of the world.
He took bright highways when the cup of noon
Was overflowing with pale loveliness.
And when the slow, still mornings, white with peace,
Made his heart ache that such a time could be,
This angel moved, unseen, by orchard walls,
And leaned to watch the grass break through the ground.
He sped through gardens when the moonlight drenched
The earliest buds with clean cascades of beauty;
And when the April stars hung in the sky,
He was a ghost that sighed with joy, being home
After so long a pilgrimage in heaven.

IV

We wondered why the Spring was doubly dear
On certain days and nights. We did not know
That one from all the sources of high things
Had breathed a special blessing on the grass,
And touched each flower before it opened wide —
A truant angel, whose great wings had brushed
The emerald hills, and, happy, disappeared!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ILLUSTRATING BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

By Annie Carroll Moore

"THE greatest artists are none too good to make drawings for children's books," wrote Rockwell Kent from Alaska in 1918. He tells of reading from a book of King Arthur stories to his nine year old son. "I don't think the pictures in the book are half nice enough," said Rockwell. "I think of a wonderful picture when you read the story and when I see the one in the book I'm disappointed."

No wonder the boy who watched the making of the drawings for "Wilderness" was disappointed by a conventionalized illustration for a King Arthur story. The names of the artists are not given in the list of books mentioned in Rockwell Kent's delightful journal of a winter spent in the wilds of Alaska, but I am quite ready to believe there wasn't a breath of life in the King Arthur pictures and that the illustrations for "Andersen's Fairy Tales" were also a disappointment.

Every time I've opened "Wilderness" I have been tempted to slip in a short list of books whose illustrations live in the memory and which I think would light up a cabin in Alaska or elsewhere for a boy like young Rockwell Kent. Since his father clearly states that imagination and romance in pictures and stories are what a child wants above everything else and that those qualities in illustration are the rarest, he may like to be reminded of a few books whose pictures possess them to a degree which sets them apart from all others.

Without any hesitation at all, I should leave "Water Babies" behind to make room for the Ruskin Grimm—"German Popular Stories" is the title under which the first selection and translation of "Grimm's Fairy Tales" into the English language was reprinted, at Ruskin's request, in 1868. The book was edited by Edgar Taylor, who made the original translation just a hundred years ago in 1823. Of the original etchings by George Cruikshank, Ruskin says they were unrivaled in masterfulness of touch since Rembrandt, while to Gleeson White, after days spent in hunting up children's books of the period, they appeared as masterpieces of design, justifying for the first time the great popularity of Cruikshank and giving almost the first glimpse of the modern ideal in illustration.

In its present form the book is not attractive to children without introduction, but I have never known a child who did not respond to the inimitable drawing for "The Elves and the Shoemaker" and, once discovered, turn back to it again and again. Of the versions of Grimm this is the most satisfactory to read aloud. Ethel Sidgwick has lately dramatized from it "The Giant with the Three Golden Hairs" and "The Robber Bridegroom", keeping very closely to her favorite text. Ruskin's introduction in defense of children's rights to their inheritance of fairy tales as the remnant of a tradition possessing historical value is even more needed today than at the time it was written, for on both sides

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the water there has been far too much careless editing and rewriting of old fairy and folk tales to accompany new illustrations. "Grimm's Household Stories", as pictured by Walter Crane, has delighted two generations of children in American public libraries and bids fair to hold a high place in years to come.

And after I had put the Ruskin Grimm in place of "Water Babies" on the Alaska bookshelf, I would substitute for "The Tree Dwellers", the "Nonsense Books" of that prince of travelers and painter of mountains, Edward Lear. The first of these books appeared in 1846, the fourth and last in 1877. For "The Cave Dwellers", I would substitute Thackeray's Christmas Pantomime "The Rose and the Ring" with his own matchless drawings, published in 1850. "The Sea People" would give right of way to Tenniel's "Alice" in the order of chronological sequence. The first volume appeared in 1865, the second in 1871.

To share the approach to any one of these books through the pictures and the artist's personality as revealed by his contemporaries is a delightful experience. If the text has seemed silly or has bored anybody, M. H. Spielman's "History of Punch" and the bound volumes of the magazine itself will send that person to look at the pictures in "Alice" and "Through the Looking Glass" with a new sense of wonder and admiration for the artist who took so much out of his own head. It is thrilling to boys and girls to know that Sir John Tenniel never forgot anything he had ever seen, and that he could reproduce it to the life. "I have a wonderful memory of observation", he says, "not for dates but anything I see I remember." When Lewis Carroll wanted him to use models for the illustrations of "Alice" he flatly refused and declared he needed none, any more than the author — a mathematician — "needed a multiplication table to work a mathematical problem". It has been said of Tenniel that his pictorial memory surpassed his imagination but to "Alice" he brought both. "It is a curious fact", he wrote some years later to Lewis Carroll, when asked to illustrate another of his books, "that with 'Through the Looking Glass' the faculty of making drawings for book illustrations departed from me and notwithstanding all sorts of tempting inducements, I have done nothing in that direction since."

I know of only one other artist who so perfectly realizes the conception of the author while communicating his own essential spirit. In his introduction to the new edition of "Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings", published in 1895, Joel Chandler Harris wrote of A. B. Frost's illustrations: "You have breathed the breath of life into these amiable brethren of wood and field. By a stroke here and a touch there you have conveyed into their quaint antics the illumination of your own inimitable humor which is as true to our sun and soil as it is to the spirit and essence of the matter set forth."

Gleeson White had said of Frost in "Children's Books and Their Illustrators": "By his cosmopolitan fun he has probably aroused more hearty laughs by his inimitable books than even Caldecott himself."

The pity is that Frost has done no series of picture books corresponding to the Caldecott picture books of which "John Gilpin" published in 1878 was the first, and "The Great Panjandrum", appearing in 1885, the last. The proposal to illustrate these books to be printed in colors was made to Caldecott by Edmund Evans, who had

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

begun printing the Walter Crane toy books more than ten years before. It is interesting to learn from Walter Crane's "Reminiscences" that while Caldecott arranged for the drawings of his toy books on a royalty basis, Walter Crane was never able to make a similar business arrangement for himself. Whether Caldecott's motto "the fewer the lines the less error committed" had anything to do with it is difficult to affirm, but we like to think it may have. There are far too many lines drawn which mean nothing in books designed for children.

Caldecott's love for animals and knowledge of them, his interest in everything connected with farming, markets, and country life in general, his lively humor and sense of beauty make of each of his picture books a pictorial record of England looking from the nineteenth century back to the eighteenth.

Randolph Caldecott is bound to America by many ties and by none more securely than those fastened upon him by the children of the public libraries. His illustrations for Washington Irving's "Old Christmas" brought the book to life, and it is amusing to find that these illustrations were considered "inartistic, flippant, vulgar and unworthy of the author" by one of the leading publishers of London when the drawings were submitted. "Old Christmas" was published in 1876.

Caldecott met Mrs. Ewing while the story of "Jackanapes" was simmering in her brain and at her request made a colored sketch of a fair haired boy on a red haired pony. At this time he designed a cover for "Aunt Judy's Magazine" and arranged to illustrate other stories of Mrs. Ewing, who had unbounded admiration for his work. After years of ill health Randolph Caldecott died in St. Augustine, Florida in 1885.

Kate Greenaway gives two or three charming glimpses of her friendship for Caldecott in the letters included in her Life and her correspondence with Ruskin, edited with rare interpretation of the artist and the child in "Kate Greenaway" by M. H. Spielman and G. S. Layard. I do not suggest this book to take to Alaska, although I could be quite happy in rereading both text and drawings any time, anywhere.

It is next to being in England in springtime to look at these drawings of old cottages and farmhouses set in fields or gardens where flowers bloom more naturally than in any book I know and children dance and play with a grace, and gravity, and charm that Kate Greenaway alone knew how to give. "Marigold Garden", the "Pied Piper" (of which 150,000 copies were sold), "A Day in a Child's Life", will be looked at with new eyes after reading what the critics of her own and other nations, notably the French, have said in praise of her art and her love of childhood for its own sake. The publication of "Under the Window" in 1878 gave Kate Greenaway a place of her own in the world and doubtless was a determining influence in Boutet de Monvel's decision to make picture books of and for the children of France, for it was in that very year that he made the drawings for the French edition of "St. Nicholas" by which he became known as an illustrator. Delagrave, who asked Boutet de Monvel to make the illustrations for a child's history of France, published this French "St. Nicholas". Between 1883 and 1897 Boutet de Monvel, a portrait and genre painter, was painting the children of France, creating and naming characters so true to life that no one who has met them

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in his books will fail to recognize them in the Luxembourg Gardens or on their way to a village school in the Aisne. Many of Boutet de Monvel's pictures are true portraits of his own children, or of his brothers and sisters as he remembered them. "Nos Enfants", "Filles et Garçons", "La Civilité", "Vieilles Chansons", and "Chansons de France" all record children playing, singing, and dancing under French skies.

"Jeanne d'Arc" was published in 1897 and became deservedly popular among American children as soon as it was given a place in the children's room of a public library as well as in its art department. I would take a copy to Alaska by all means, and preferably in the French language, to fix the authenticity of the book in the boy's mind and stimulate a spontaneous desire to read the simple text which accompanies the pictures. It is now possible to include two or three of Beatrix Potter's little books which are as true to nature and art in the French language as in their native English.

"Pierre Lapin" or "Jeannot Lapin", accompanied by Beatrix Potter's "Christmas Tale of the Tailor of Gloucester" in English, would make a child or grown up feel at home anywhere.

Two books I should want to take to Alaska for their remarkable pictorial impressions of the north and the folk interest are: Snorre Sturlason's "Kongesagaer", which is illustrated by six of the leading artists of Norway, and "Norske Folkeeventyr" illustrated by Erik Werenskiold. The illustrations in both books are unique in their power to reincarnate the old sagas and invest the life of both animals and people of the north with the racial inheritance which belongs to them. Since neither of these books is readily obtainable for a journey I would make a point of asking a boy to go to see them wherever they could be found. Asking boys to look at certain special books in libraries or bookshops is a most interesting thing to do. If I could find a volume of "St. Nicholas" between the date of its first publication, 1873, and 1883, I would certainly add it to the Alaskan collection, for among the pictures the drawings of the best artists of the day would be reprinted. Mary Mapes Dodge did not hesitate to ask anyone, writer or artist, to do his best work for children. The reason why so many of the pictures in "St. Nicholas" are remembered is for the simple reason that the drawings were good and the subjects interesting. Howard Pyle was a contributor to "St. Nicholas" years before his illustrations for "Robin Hood", "Pepper and Salt", and "Wonder Clock" gave him his own place among American illustrators of children's books. Palmer Cox, whose "Brownie Books" are still the favorite picture books in American libraries after more than forty years, made his first drawings for "St. Nicholas".

The good art of this American magazine stands out in constructive testimony of what could be done in a period when æsthetic movements of one sort or another were playing, as they are still, with all sorts of things which had no bearing on the illustration of books for children.

Young Rockwell Kent must be fourteen years old now. He came back from Alaska at the end of six months, but that bookshelf still intrigues my imagination and I should like to add to it two books of Lovat Fraser, "Nursery Rhymes" and "Pirates", both of which have been received with enthusiasm by big boys and little ones

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the children's rooms of the libraries in the holidays of 1922. "Nursery lore remains with us, whether we would or not, for all our lives", he says in his introduction to "Pirates", published in 1913; "and generations of ourselves, as schoolboys and pre-schoolboys, have tricked out Piracy in so resplendent a dress that she has fairly ousted in our affections, not only her sister profession of 'High Toby and the Road', but every other splendid and villainous vocation."

The untimely death of Lovat Fraser in 1921 is as great a loss to children's books as to the dramatic world, which he enriched by his "Beggar's Opera".

To place a "Velveteen Rabbit" at the end of a bookshelf which spans a century of illustration of children's books may seem a strange thing to do to those who have not seen William Nicholson's pictures for it, and who are unacquainted with the artist's remarkable character portraits which appeared about twenty-five years ago.

Mr. Nicholson has always been thought of as the painter of what he sees. His character portrait of the old Queen with her dog done from life anticipated Lytton Strachey's book by many years and surpasses it for those pictorially minded. He has painted some remarkable portraits of children.

Why should he be interested in bringing a velveteen rabbit — a child's nursery toy — to life? I wanted to know so I went to Appletree Yard to ask him. The story touched him, he said, and he had taken it away with him on a holiday at the request of Sydney Pawling who had fallen in love with the story, believed it a classic for children, and wanted to give it the best form he could devise.

Mr. Nicholson had worked from models to some extent — I found the velveteen rabbit on the chimney piece in the studio, the old skin horse had been in his family for many years — but it is his imaginative understanding of the past and the reality of children and their interests in his own life which enabled him to give personality to a velveteen rabbit in a nursery and place him in the open fields and woods with his wild brothers with a certainty of record that admits of no challenge by child or grown up.

The children say of the pictures, "You can almost see the Velveteen Rabbit changing."

Wilderness. By Rockwell Kent. G. P. Putnam's Sons.
German Popular Stories. Illustrated by George Cruikshank with an introduction by John Ruskin. Chatto and Windus.
Grimm's Household Stories. Illustrated by Walter Crane. The Macmillan Co.
The Complete Nonsense Anthology. By Edward Lear. Duffield and Co.
The Rose and the Ring. Illustrated by W. M. Thackeray. G. P. Putnam's Sons.
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass. Illustrated by Sir John Tenniel. The Macmillan Co.
Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings. Illustrated by A. B. Frost. D. Appleton and Co.
An Artist's Reminiscences. By Walter Crane. The Macmillan Co.
Picture Books. Illustrated by Randolph Caldecott. Frederick Warne and Co.
Kate Greenaway. By M. H. Spielman and G. S. Layard. Adam and Charles Black.
Under the Window. By Kate Greenaway. Frederick Warne and Co.
Jeanne d'Arc. By Boutet de Monvel. Plon, Nourrit.
Pierre Lapin. By Beatrix Potter. Frederick Warne and Co.
Pepper and Salt. By Howard Pyle. Harper and Bros.
Robin Hood. By Howard Pyle. Charles Scribner's Sons.
The Brownies. By Palmer Cox. The Century Co.
Nursery Rhymes. By Lovat Fraser. T. and E. C. Jack. Alfred A. Knopf.
Pirates. By Lovat Fraser. Billing and Sons. Robert M. McBride and Co.
The Velveteen Rabbit. By Margery Williams. Illustrated by William Nicholson. William Heinemann. George H. Doran Company.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BOOKMAN'S GUIDE TO FICTION

THE BOOKMAN *will present each month tabloid reviews of a selected list of recent fiction. This section will include also the books most in demand according to the current reports in "Books of the Month", compiled by the R. R. Bowker Company, The Baker and Taylor Company's "Monthly Book Bulletin", McClurg's "Monthly Bulletin of New Books", and* "THE BOOKMAN'S *Monthly Score". Such books as the editor especially recommends are marked with a star.*

YELLOW BUTTERFLIES—Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews—*Scribner.* A tribute to all mothers of that unknown soldier who lies at Arlington.

IN THE DAYS OF POOR RICHARD—Irving Bacheller—*Bobbs-Merrill.* Benjamin Franklin, humanly and faithfully presented, makes this historical novel a warm and moving tale.

FLOWING GOLD—Rex Beach—*Harper.* The Texas oil country furnishes a comparatively new setting for the good old story of business daring and frontier romance.

MISS MAPP—E. F. Benson—*Doran.* Gentle social comedy such as English villages exist to provide.

THE YELLOW TRAIL—E. Manchester Boddy—*Times-Mirror.* A blood and thunder story. If you like it at all, you'll like it a lot.

ALCATRAZ—Max Brand—*Putnam.* Every lover of a good horse will enjoy reading how the hero won this marvelous golden chestnut racer.

HUNTINGTOWER—John Buchan—*Doran.* A middle aged Scottish grocer foils Russian plotters, and not entirely by his accent. Rather good characterization and humor.

THE GENTLEMAN FROM SAN FRANCISCO—I. A. Bunin—*Seltzer.* Not because they are Russian and so in vogue but because they have been given power to nurture deep, unhysterical emotion, these stories should be read.

ROBIN—Frances Hodgson Burnett—*Stokes.* Carries on the story of "The Head of the House of Coombe" and is a trifle more sentimental.

*ROUGH-HEWN—Dorothy Canfield—*Harcourt, Brace.* A story of simple love told with simplicity but also with a deep psychological understanding of life which makes it actually exciting.

*ONE OF OURS—Willa Cather—*Knopf.* If Miss Cather herself had fought in the war this would have been one of the most perfect studies of American youth ever written.

ABOVE SUSPICION—Robert Orr Chipperfield—*McBride.* The only one to solve this murder mystery is the stone mason, Geoff Peters, and he confides only in the reader.

THE COUNTRY BEYOND—James Oliver Curwood—*Cosmopolitan.* A beautiful and exotic heroine, a heroic young man, the great northwest, a wise dog—mixed in thrilling moments such as only happen in this author's great northwest.

CHARLES REX—Ethel M. Dell—*Putnam.* Says Toby in this novel: "I don't know—very much about—love. No one ever—really—loved me before." But how much Miss Dell knows about love is soon evident.

THE BLACK WATER O'DEE—James McKenzie Douglas—*Barton.* Good material for a novel describing the smugglers of Scotland under the Georges has been ruined by a melodramatic Mr. Malaprop.

THE SHADOW ON THE GLASS—Charles J. Dutton—*Dodd, Mead.* All the old familiar props revived, to make a brand new mystery story.

TUMBLEWEEDS—Hal G. Evarts—*Little, Brown.* This lively account of the last great land rush in the west has its full share of love making, cowboys, and road agents.

PEREGRINE'S PROGRESS—Jeffery Farnol—*Little, Brown.* An artistic young man turns from his evil ways to adventure in rollicking fashion along the old highway.

THE LOST MR. LINTHWAITE—J. S. Fletcher—*Knopf.* His nephew found him by very

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

odd methods, unmasked the villain and won the girl.

CASTE—W. A. Fraser—*Doran.* Confused but indubitably heroic doings in India, period uncertain.

DRUIDA—John T. Frederick—*Knopf.* A first novel of the American plains of today bringing a good story and promising pictures of setting and characters.

FUTILITY — William Gerhardi — *Duffield.* Another undistinctive attempt to paint Russian character and psychology in English, though its portraits are at times quite living.

PAGAN LOVE—John Murray Gibbon—*Doran.* What happens when you change your sex.

THE STEP ON THE STAIR—Anna Katharine Green—*Dodd, Mead.* Two cousins, both named after their rich uncle, hunt for the will that enriches one of them. Miss Green weaves her web as well as ever.

WANDERERS OF THE WASTELAND—Zane Grey—*Harper.* Death Valley and the Salton Sink at their terrible worst could not overcome Adam, the Wanderer. The studies of the desert alone are worth the price of admission.

THE RED RUNNERS—Sekatary Hawkins—*Stewart Kidd.* The Kentucky boys in this new volume of the Sekatary series have a queer gang to fight, and the better boys win. There are many illustrations which purport to be the work of some budding Raphael.

NORTH—James B. Hendryx—*Putnam.* Dawson's first Christmas Day and the 400 mile Alaska Sweepstakes are the high lights in this exciting story of cold and dog teams and gold hunting.

*THE BRIGHT SHAWL—Joseph Hergesheimer—*Knopf.* Bright Cuban color with revolutionary excitement does not keep this from being a frigid but masterful psychological study.

MY LADY'S BARGAIN—Elizabeth Hope—*Century.* Movie directors please note. Here's a historical novel with as exciting possibilities as any since "When Knighthood Was in Flower".

*IF WINTER COMES—A. S. M. Hutchinson—*Little, Brown.* Persists day by day not only in being a best seller, but in being a far better book in every way than "This Freedom".

*THIS FREEDOM—A. S. M. Hutchinson—*Little, Brown.* Interesting as a challenge to the new woman. A not-so-well-written attempt to prove again an old thesis.

THE EAST WIND—Hugh MacNair Kahler—*Putnam.* Stories of the spirit that makes men cling to bleak farms as sailors cleave to the sea—but it's something short of "Main-Traveled Roads".

PERADVENTURE—Robert Keable—*Putnam.* A boy's search for the true religion, without the "Simon Called Peter" sensationalism for which, it must be said, Mr. Keable seems better suited.

SIMON CALLED PETER—Robert Keable—*Dutton.* How a highly strict young man becomes less so in the oversexed period of the great war.

THE CODE OF THE KARSTENS—Henry Walsworth Kinney—*Little, Brown.* Nathalie, Elsa, Marguerite, Lucie, Karen, Anna, Katherine, Jun-san—he learned about women from 'er.

CAPPY RICKS RETIRES—Peter B. Kyne—*Cosmopolitan.* The old ship owner discovers more ways in which money might be coined than ever before in his delightful and wandering career.

*BABBITT — Sinclair Lewis — *Harcourt, Brace.* This excellent satirical study of the American middle class business man is now a best seller both in England and America.

FAIR HARBOR—Joseph C. Lincoln—*Appleton.* How Captain Sears Kendrick manages a home for old women—sea dogs all of them, including the captain. Rich in humor.

THE TALE OF TRIONA—William J. Locke—*Dodd, Mead.* A bogus literary reputation affords exciting background for Olivia Gale's love story.

MAN'S COUNTRY—Peter Clark Macfarlane—*Cosmopolitan.* A great love saves a frail woman from selfishness and a he-man from the country of business where men are not men.

THE SEVEN AGES OF WOMAN—Compton Mackenzie—*Stokes.* While the heroine may be well known by the end of the book, one feels little the richer for the new acquaintance.

THE CHURCH ON THE AVENUE—Helen R. Martin—*Dodd, Mead.* The wife of a Scotch minister in a Pennsylvania Dutch town arouses our sincerest sympathy.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

*Town and Gown—Lynn Montross and Lois Seyster Montross—*Doran.* The college, especially the midwestern college, to the life.

*Where the Blue Begins—Christopher Morley—*Doubleday, Page.* Genial and penetrating satire in which a dog adopts the manners and form of a gentleman—or nearly so.

Broken Barriers—Meredith Nicholson—*Scribner.* How the modern girl may decide that steadiness in life is greater than freedom.

*Certain People of Importance—Kathleen Norris—*Doubleday, Page.* Detailed portraiture of several generations of a San Francisco family, with high lights of drama and romance scattered through much realism.

The Triumph of the Scarlet Pimpernel—Baroness Orczy—*Doran.* A familiar hero resurrected and, apparently, no worse for his temporary interment.

McCarthy Incog—Isabel Ostrander—*McBride.* Tim McCarty, ex-detective, and his quarrelsome friend Riordan show themselves less astute than usual but as lucky as ever.

Island of the Innocent—Grant Overton—*Doran.* The sex impulse in women interpreted in a novel which despite theme and title is not "sexy".

Carnac's Folly—Gilbert Parker—*Lippincott.* Canadian politics, manly virtues, and a love story which is readable enough.

Dusk of Moonrise—Diana Patrick—*Dutton.* With Yorkshire dales for a setting, Miss Patrick has given us a carefully planned, well executed novel, written with admirable restraint and much understanding.

Foursquare — Grace S. Richmond — *Doubleday, Page.* The professions of literature and teaching form the background for a story filled with a strong sentiment for high ideals.

*The Breaking Point—Mary Roberts Rinehart—*Doran.* A mystery story cleverly combined with a psychological study of that curious side of every man's character which he hides from himself.

Captain Blood—Rafael Sabatini—*Houghton Mifflin.* A wild Irishman turned pirate adrift on the Spanish Main.

The Shorn Lamb—Emma Speed Sampson—*Reilly, Lee.* A love story with plenty of colorful southern background, mammies, cotton fields, et al.

*Gentle Julia—Booth Tarkington—*Doubleday, Page.* Several Tarkington young people in several combinations of romantic affection.

Lochinvar Luck—Albert Payson Terhune—*Doran.* Better than Mr. Terhune's earlier dog stories because he has apparently discovered that, while dog interest is all very well, human interest is even better.

The Pointed Tower—Vance Thompson—*Bobbs-Merrill.* "The only witnesses who never lie, are those who cannot talk," states Dr. Guelpa after solving the mystery surrounding the death of Count de Granleiu.

*The Cathedral—Hugh Walpole—*Doran.* Circumstance, gossip, and his own pride combine to bring a great man to destruction and death. A rich picture of life in an English cathedral town.

*Joseph Greer and His Daughter—Henry Kitchell Webster—*Bobbs-Merrill.* Joseph Greer and his daughter are splendid characterizations and the story is almost if not quite so well done as are they.

Bedouin Love—Arthur Weigall—*Doran.* The opposite of the hardy or perennial variety; the kind that grows in the garden of Allah rather than the garden of Eden.

The Glimpses of the Moon—Edith Wharton—*Appleton.* The ramblings through society and love of two impoverished but still exceedingly mannered young people whose breeding does always stand the strain of circumstance.

Salome of the Tenements—Anzia Yezierska—*Boni, Liveright.* A soul consumed with hunger for the heights beyond reach marries a wealthy uplifter, with tragic results.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS—

Three Young American Poets

SINCE he published "In American", John V. A. Weaver has gained a surer touch and a deeper understanding. His "Finders" (Knopf), if it is not quite so fresh a book, is assuredly a far better one. Mr. Weaver has an unusual faculty for choosing a common incident in life, giving it an original twist, then clothing it with the sure sentiment of common people, which, when handled with intelligence and insight, practically always just escapes the sentimental. This is what makes these verses in the common speech authentic as well as popular poetry. It is the quality of Robert Burns. It is something which Mr. Weaver, despite whatever critics may arise to belittle his work, should prize highly and should nourish. I somehow feel that the lyrics are more important than the longer dramatic dialogues, though it is in the latter that I feel more keenly the increased ability to translate widening experience into the terms of character and dialect. Take "Yeast", for example, with its ironical close:

Mister, I says it now, there was some woman!
Cranky, and buttin'-in, and sour-faced —
But lemme tell you, if they is a Heaven,
And I get there some day, I know one thing:
The first sight that I'll see'll be Miss Jobson,
Orderin' angels round, and tellin' the Lord
His self what he should do. . . . Some woman, mister!

And the power and passion of "Old". As I read that poem over again I am inclined to prophesy that it will be read long after Mr. Weaver's name has been forgotten. However, it is the songs that are best! "Never Pick Wild Flowers", "Legend", and "Two Ways" are my favorites. They run in the head. They are poems to memorize, poems, in fact, that you cannot help remembering. "Carolina Chansons" (Macmillan), a group of historical and atmospherical poems by Du Bose Heyward and Hervey Allen, show them again to be among the most promising of the younger men in America. If these poems do not lift to lyric heights, they are never slipshod, never without a certain distinction. These two young men are becoming experts in the craft of poetry making. The book is filled with beauty and with melody. It is brilliant, too, dramatic; but, I think, never impassioned, never deeply human. Here is a lovely picture from Mr. Allen's "Middleton Garden":

The faint, crisp rustle of magnolia leaves
Rasps with the crackling scratch of old brocade,
The low bird-voices ripple like the laugh
Of Watteau beauties coiffured, with pomade;
Here ribboned dandies offered scented snuffs
To other ghosts, beneath the giant trees —
Was that a flash of rose-flamingo stuffs —
Azaleas? — was a sneeze blown down the breeze?

And, in a quieter manner from Mr. Heyward's "Silences", lines that have a rare quality of calm beauty:

All lovely things went down the sanguine tide,
While death made moaning answer to the gun.
Then, as a golden voice dies in the throat
Of one who lives, but whose glad heart is dead,
The bells were taken; and a sterner note
Rang from their bronze where Lee and Jackson led.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The rhythmic seasons chill and burn and chill,
Cooling old angers, warming hearts again.
The ancient building quickens to the thrill
Of lilting feet; but only singing rain
Flutters old echoes in the portico;
Those who can still remember love it so.

A *True Novel of Spring*

AS light as blown dandelions is this latest example of the escape novel; but how satisfying as an adventure in forgetfulness. "The Enchanted April" (Doubleday, Page) has all the ingredients that made "Pollyanna" popular except the banality. The author of "Elizabeth and Her German Garden" has surely written here another successful book; for what woman, what man for that matter, has not longed to run away to wistaria and Italian castelli to try life away from whatever family entanglements there may be? Yet how often do those same entanglements, moved to different surroundings, prove to be the most magical part of the enchantment. Perhaps, you may say, life does not always unfold this way. Most likely, you are right; but why shouldn't it? The author does not attempt to prove anything. She simply sets down four Englishwomen: two simple housewives, a little tired of their husbands, a pompous and grandiose matron, and a beautiful bold young aristocrat. She sets them in her Italian sunshine, pours in three gentlemen, and lets her subtle knowledge of character do the rest. The most obvious thing to say about this novel is, that it is almost perfect reading for those days when the promise of spring is in the air but the facts of winter are still here!

New Spirits and Tomorrows

SO much prophesying, analyzing, and worrying goes on among the literary wiseacres, and to what purpose? Purposeful enough, perhaps, if we are made to indulge in a mood, however brief, of contemplation. "The New Spirit in English Verse" (Dutton) is imported from England where it was compiled by Ernest Guy Pertwee as part of a series for "Readers and Reciters". It is a curious little book, one that should be popular though it scarcely represents the new mood. Its selection of poems is distinctly based on their readability and not on the spirit they show. However, in one volume we have here gathered such diverse and beautiful things as Rupert Brooke's "The Dead", Padraic Colum's "The Old Woman of the Roads", Walter de la Mare's "The Ghost", Ralph Hodgson's "Eve", along with rhythmic ballads like Patrick R. Chalmers's "Roundabouts and Swings" (if you don't know it you should buy the book if only for the knowing), Kipling's "Soldier, Soldier", and Masefield's "Roadways". Here, too, is Charlotte Mew's superb "The Farmer's Bride", James Stephens's arresting "Hate" — well, if you want a book which in pocket size contains the easiest poems to read of the best contemporary Englishmen, here it is! The symposium of essays on the novel made by "The New Republic" and now published as a small book, "The Novel of Tomorrow" (Bobbs-Merrill), is less valuable as a study of the novel than it is as a glimpse at the personalities of those who write concerning the novel. I like best the pieces by Floyd Dell and Joseph Hergesheimer, though all the essays are illuminating.

—*J. F.*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BOOK OF THE MONTH

A. E. HOUSMAN'S "LAST POEMS"

By William Rose Benét

Mr. Benét's review is the third of a series of longer book reviews to be published each month in THE BOOKMAN. *The books discussed will not necessarily be new nor will they be books which have never before been reviewed in the magazine. The aim of the editors is to present, in the selection of volumes and reviewers, articles which shall constitute solid pieces of criticism.*

OUR after-the-war days have been, profoundly, days of disillusionment. This feeling has been reflected in our literature. The late nineties of the last century were days of disillusionment no less. But it was disillusionment of a different description. We hope to build. For *fin de siècle* Yellow Bookery there was no hope in achievement on this earth. There was only the hope of escape — the hope to die. This statement may be overemphatic, but I think the general distinction holds true.

A. E. Housman published in the late nineties some sixty poems which reflected the spirit of the close of his century, though they were of a grain that set them immediately apart from the characteristic work of that period. Now, in our own time, after long silence, he issues his "Last Poems", and strangely enough they fall in very well with the spirit of our own time. At least they are "good medicine" for our time; even though it is not too brash of us to assert beyond their general conclusion that it is still worth while building, worth while enjoying and striving while we live.

Yet Housman also says that. We shall see this presently.

Few realize that Housman was thirty-seven years old when "A Shropshire Lad" was published, and that now he is about sixty-four years old. When he remarks in his tiny foreword: "It is not likely that I shall ever be impelled to write much more. I can no longer expect to be revisited by the continuous excitement under which in the early months of 1895 I wrote the greater part of my other book, nor indeed could I well sustain it if it came", there is a mild irony in the statement. Housman has, indeed, completed his "century" — if we take the word in the sense that cricketers use it when any cricketer amasses one hundred runs. Housman has written a few over one hundred poems, and on these hundred or so poems, many of them most brief, his whole reputation rests.

Now if I were to add one letter to the word "century", making it "centaury", from the Greek *kentaureion*, in that word you would have the essence of his gift to our age; for centaury is the name of a herb said to have been used medicinally by the centaur Chiron, the instructor of the young heroes. And as Chiron was to the youth of his day, in his stoicism, sad wisdom, and the virtues of his magic herb, so is Housman to the younger poets of our own.

We find in him knowledge of the flesh and, through the flesh, knowledge of the spirit. Each leaf of his books

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

astringently medicines. The words of a poem in "A Shropshire Lad" revealed his purpose:

Therefore, since the world has still
Much good, but much less good than ill,
And while the sun and moon endure
Luck's a chance, but trouble's sure,
I'd face it as a wise man would
And train for ill and not for good.
'Tis true, the stuff I bring for sale
Is not so brisk a brew as ale:
Out of a stem that scored the hand
I wrung it in a weary land.
But take it: if the smack is sour,
The better for the embittered hour;
It should do good to heart and head
When your soul is in my soul's stead;
And I will friend you, if I may,
In the dark and cloudy day.

That is what I meant by "good medicine". I said I would explain why I thought Housman's counsels brave. Well, when he takes his questioning to "the heart within that tells the truth", his conclusion is, after all other reflection:

The Spartans on the sea-wet rock sat down
and combed their hair.

It is a courageous conclusion. The conclusions of most of his poems are courageous; they are certainly stoic.

Deep disillusionment and deep rebelliousness are in him also; but he has mixed us a "bracer" from the hemlock of Socrates.

Examining "Last Poems" more closely we find, quite naturally, less about young love in it, as much again, about battle. There is also Housman's obsession with the idea of the gallows. Oftener, it seems to me, in the songs of the first book "the feather pate of folly" bore "the falling sky". Once indeed, out of more sombre pages, flashed the talaria of Hermes, flickering the presence of the god of eternal youth

With lips that brim with laughter
But never once respond,
And feet that fly on feathers,
And serpent-circled wand.

"Fancy's Knell", which ends "Last Poems", is a far, faint echo from that time, when

The girl would lift her glances
To his, and both be mute:
Well went the dances
At evening to the flute.

In execution I find "Last Poems" little, if at all, inferior to "A Shropshire Lad". There is, perhaps, nothing quite so perfect in its poignancy as was that first cry of youth, "When I was one-and-twenty." Yet the work in "Last Poems" is again admirably compact, admirably reticent, often admirably melodious. Again many lines, many verses, deeply imprint the memory. It had seemed, when one first read in the first book "Farewell to barn and stack and tree", that never again could a man render so perfectly the atmosphere of mortal tragedy. But, in "Last Poems" we have "Eight O'Clock", stark fatality, perfectly presented in eight lines. We have also the bitterly moving poem just before it, "The Culprit", which could not possibly be bettered in expression. And in "The rain, it streams on stone and hillock" is what seems, to me at least, about the truest transcript of a man's grief for a fellow man that has ever been versified. It is intolerably searching in its recognition of the casuistry of human sorrow, in its setting of the lips and lifting of the chin — till the last verse leaps out with sudden terrible eloquence.

In "West and away the wheels of darkness roll" is a most original image, springing from a more scientifically accurate view of the world in space than most poets have taken:

But over sea and continent from sight
Safe to the Indies has the earth conveyed
The vast and moon-eclipsing cone of night,
Her towering foolscap of eternal shade.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Such is the deftness of Housman's technique. The depth of his thinking can be illustrated by these eight lines:

Could man be drunk for ever
With liquor, love or fights,
Lief should I rouse at morning
And lief lie down of nights.

But men at whiles are sober
And think by fits and starts,
And if they think, they fasten
Their hands upon their hearts.

In the above we get some idea of Housman's intensity of feeling as well as the range of his powers of visualization. His poem "The laws of God, the laws of man" is like to become a new testament for free thinkers. "Hell Gate", the longest poem in "Last Poems", reveals fiery dramatic imagination. "Lancer" may be excerpted from to illustrate the power of his irony. It epitomizes by inference both the glamour and the waste of war.

For round me the men will be lying
That learned me the way to behave,
And showed me the business of dying:
Oh who would not sleep with the brave?

They ask and there is not an answer;
Says I, I will 'list for a lancer,
Oh who would not sleep with the brave?

One triumph of technique impresses as it has always impressed. A. E. Housman is one of the few living poets who knows how and just where to end a poem. His terminations are remarkably effective. His gifts of condensation, elimination, and intimation contribute to this.

For so the game is ended
That should not have begun.
My father and my mother
They had a likely son,
And I have none.

Technique accomplishes it, but the effectiveness of the poem springs more deeply from the power of the emotion behind it. All the poet's gifts would prove void were it not for the intensity of a point of view to which all his poems are but footnotes.

Several people have commented recently upon his debt to Heine's "Buch der Lieder" in "Sinner's Rue". This poem seems indeed an unacknowledged translation of

Am Kreuzweg wird begraben
Wer selber sich brachte um:
Dort wächst eine blaue Blume
Die Armesünderblum, etc.

Housman has evidently been long enthralled by the poems of Heinrich Heine. But even in this case he assimilates the poem in such a way as to make both phrase and cadence chiefly his own.

Of the influences and circumstances that sharpened Housman's point of view we know but little. We know that the same shire that fostered Hazlitt is Housman's shire. We know that after leaving Oxford he clerked for ten years in the Patent Office and for nineteen years was professor of Latin at University College, London — that in 1911 he went to Cambridge where he is still professor of Latin, that he has written for philological journals and edited Manilius and Juvenal. We have read of him as an odd and "cranky" personality, a recluse and a crabbed scholar — we can weigh the obsessions of his mind, calculate from the form and tone of his work its peculiar strains and stresses. But the intimate man remains a mystery.

If the permanence of poetry be in proportion to the intelligent emotion it evokes, Housman's poetry should certainly endure. His style is wholly his own. He is master of a certain kind of strict expression. And he is still, in many ways, the noblest Roman of them all.

Last Poems. By A. E. Housman. Henry Holt and Co.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

NATIONAL TRADITION

By John Erskine

THIS vigorous and stimulating book is a collection of essays written for widely different purposes and at different times, but all on American subjects; and the author has tied them together by a foreword in which he invites the reader to take the chapters as one study of nationalism. "If this book fulfills to any degree the intention of its author, its tendency will be to encourage readers to keep open the channels of their national traditions and to scrutinize contemporary literature in the light of their national past." Were we to read the essays separately, without any such hint that they carry a doctrine in common, we should enjoy to the full their beauty of style, their spontaneity, their wit; but since we have fair warning that they express one philosophy, our pleasure is somewhat slackened by the duty of finding out what the philosophy is. And were we reading this collection of essays as Mr. Sherman's first book, we should say at once that a critic of considerable ability and a stylist of the first order had emerged; but since Mr. Sherman's position as scholar, critic, and stylist is well established, he must forgive us if we fasten our eye at once on that preface of his, which tries to give unity to a miscellaneous lot of essays — brilliant essays, but miscellaneous; he will forgive us if we say at once that this would have been a better book had he written directly on the American tradition, with Franklin, Emerson, Hawthorne, Whitman, Joaquin Miller, Andrew Carnegie, and Paul Elmer More as the good examples; Mr. Mencken, Mr. Lewisohn, and Carl Sandburg as the horrible examples; and Theodore Roosevelt a temporary apparition, a sport or throwback in the nation's evolution — instead of writing separately, as he has done, on each of these gentlemen, and applying to them afterward, and one might say, surreptitiously, the test of loosely defined Americanism.

If we are to take the book as the author asks us to, we must inquire at once what Mr. Sherman means when he hopes we shall keep open the channels of our national traditions; for in the first chapter he is obviously annoyed at Mr. Mencken for being a German at heart, and for erecting "a new school of criticism on modern German principles, which he traces through Spingarn to Goethe". Well, if Mr. Mencken is a German at heart, and if he keeps the channels of his national traditions open, he naturally would trace his principles back to Goethe. I have very little use myself for Mr. Mencken's school of criticism, as criticism, but it has always seemed interesting as assault and battery, and so long as no one prosecutes him for his attacks, I assume that what he says is either negligible or true. To retort in a personal way, by explaining him on racial grounds, is to do him the compliment of imitating his methods. But quite aside from Mr. Mencken, is it not desirable that the German American, the Italian American, the Swedish and Irish and English Americans, should all keep open, for our common benefit, the channels of their

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

national traditions? To me this seems indisputable; without this hope of a culture enriched from many sources, Americanism would be undistinguished and uninspiring, and for any one racial strain to monopolize our culture would be to make this land simply a colony of some European or Oriental country. I am troubled with a suspicion, however, that this is what Mr. Sherman wants; when he says that "Americans who desire to know the breadth and humanity of their own traditions should give some days and nights to the study of the eighteenth century", he seems to think of us all as having arrived in America so long ago that Franklin really is one of "our own traditions". I quite agree with him that the creation of the American government in the eighteenth century was one of the great political achievements of the human race, and believing devoutly as I do in the wisdom of our Constitution, I agree that we ought to know as much as possible about it; but for most of us it is wisdom to be acquired, not a tradition. Moreover, if one honestly believes in the doctrines of our Constitution, as Mr. Sherman and I do, one cannot approve of departures from it in recent times, nor of the claim of those who engineered the departures that they represent the American tradition. I have an uneasy feeling that Mr. Sherman would not go all the way with me in that last sentence — and I rather think that some of the Americans whom he considers un-American would understand perfectly what I mean; their unwillingness to accept the so called Puritan tradition rises, in some instances, from their knowledge that the Puritans could not have accepted it, either.

The illustration that comes to my mind is in the chapter on "Tradition", in which Mr. Sherman says some extraordinarily wise things, and then, as it seems to me, gets caught in an emotion or a prejudice and trips badly. For an example of his wisdom — "Tradition is more than a school of crafts. It is a school of mood and manners. The artist who is also a scholar cannot fail to discover that what distinguishes all the golden periods of art, what constitutes the perpetual appeal of the masters, is a kind of innermost poise and serenity, tragic in Sophocles, heroic in Michelangelo, skeptical in Montaigne, idyllic in Sidney, ironic in Fielding." This idea allures me, though the illustrations of it suggest to me as a critic the question why Sidney and Fielding are grouped with such giants, and why Shakespeare and Goethe are left out. Dante is omitted, I suppose, for the sake of the theory, since with all his learning and his genius he was hardly serene. But a few pages beyond this praise of serenity Mr. Sherman begins to address himself personally to Ludwig Lewisohn. Mr. Lewisohn, he says, after having posed as a prophet of internationalism, in "Up Stream" "drops the mask and reveals himself, for all his Jewish radicalism, as essentially a sentimental and homesick German, longing in exile for a Germany which exists only in his imagination". Well, if Mr. Lewisohn is a Jew and a German, I decline to be surprised that he keeps open the channels of his national traditions. His book, which Mr. Sherman quotes from, deals with a real problem, and, as many of us think, deals with it in a wrong way. But I am surprised that the one passage in it which Mr. Sherman quotes as evidence that Mr. Lewisohn is "a sentimental and homesick German", is a passage with which I thoroughly sym-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pathize. Does that make me too a sentimental and homesick German? Mr. Sherman quotes it with derision, and put into italics one sentence, by way of bearing hard on Mr. Lewisohn's idea of civilization: "The lamps of the tavern" (in New York, Mr. Sherman explains, before the Volstead act) "had orange-colored shades, the wainscoting was black with age. The place was filled with a soothing dusk and the blended odor of beer and tobacco and Wiener Schnitzel. *I was, at least, back in civilization.* That tavern is gone now, swept away by the barbarism of the New-Puritans."

Now what Mr. Lewisohn clearly means is that in the old tavern he felt a sense of that continuity and tradition which Mr. Sherman is talking about, and which is civilization; and he meant to say that there is no civilization where customs are not traditional, but are regulated from year to year by those who take charge of our morals. In this passage at least, he would have the signers of the Declaration and the makers of the Constitution with him. As I read his words, I remembered the occasion when Howells met Whitman for the first time, in old Pabst's, and thought of the pleasure Hawthorne took in the old inns of England. Does it make any difference to the philosophic mind whether the inn serves ale or beer, beef or Wiener Schnitzel?

As a matter of fact, I am as great a lover of tradition as Mr. Sherman, and I suspect I am far more conservative. I have taken issue sharply with him here because he has spoken for the side I favor, and it seems to me too important a side to be presented carelessly, or incompletely, or with the misleading flavor of personal innuendo.

Americans. By Stuart P. Sherman. Charles Scribner's Sons.

RECORDING THE WAR

By Wilbur Cortez Abbott

WITH the appearance of Mr. Buchan's "History of the Great War" it is apparent that we have entered upon another stage of the chronicling of that world catastrophe. It is, in a sense, an extraordinary phenomenon, this rapidity of mobilization of the historical forces and their entry into action. In previous wars it has not been possible for men to begin to write what was in any sense an accurate account of any conflict for many years after the event, owing to the lack of authoritative material. Yet here, in less than half a decade after the armistice, we are beginning to read if not definitive at least more than tolerably satisfactory accounts of the great struggle.

The reasons for this are fairly obvious. They are first the remarkable circumstances of the years succeeding the war — the publication of infinite documents which in previous times would not have seen the light for a generation or more. The revolutionaries have altered more than the forms of government, they have thrown extraordinary light upon the past by their issue of the contents of archives. Besides, many of the leaders on both sides have rushed into print with apologiæ, memoirs, criticisms, explanations, even histories, to an extent scarcely known before, even in our own Civil War or in the War of 1870-71. Governments have taken up at once and in all seriousness the recording of the events of the war, as they have never done before. And furthermore there has been made available for public use a mass of material which older generations would have regarded as "mysteries of state". Such has been the effect of the devel-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

opment of "democracy", or "public opinion", or whatever name one chooses to give to an age of publicity. Whatever the status of the "new diplomacy", or of "open covenants openly arrived at", there is no doubt about the new historiography, and the new attitude toward the facts of history.

What advantages Mr. Buchan has had in writing these volumes is apparent, not only from his publishers' statement regarding his peculiarly fortunate position during the war and since with regard to the collection of material, but from these general considerations. And no characteristic of his book is of more significance than the detailed accuracy of his information as compared with such works as the narratives of Halsey and Simonds — excellent for their time they were, but lacking the material from the memoirs and dispatches and archives which has been printed since they appeared. It is to be expected, therefore, that Mr. Buchan, with his remarkable facilities for acquiring information, and his no less remarkable literary talent, should produce the best history of the great war which has yet been written; and that expectation is not disappointed.

For Mr. Buchan has not only material, he has the capacity to handle it. He has, above all, style. That does not mean he is a mere rhetorician, for historical style is largely apart from mere rhetoric. It is the capacity to tell a true story vividly, to arrange and present masses of facts so that they may be at once clear, convincing, and entertaining. Himself a Briton, and, like George III, glorying in the name, he naturally stresses the part his heroic countrymen, whether of island or Empire, played in that struggle — his Briticism "our" as applied to those troops will grate on some ears. Yet he does not thereby discriminate against the heroism of other peoples, nor magnify unduly the British share in the conflict, nor sacrifice the proportions of the narrative to his patriotism.

And in two respects, if in no others, his history is of peculiar value and interest. It devotes an attention to the "sideshows" in the remoter fields of action for which his wide experience and his imperial training fit him above all other men to treat understandingly and sympathetically. And it manages, somehow, to correlate the infinite activities of the world wide conflict so that one is seldom at a loss for the connection, and seldom, if ever, loses the thread of the narrative. For this is, above its fellows, a history of a *world* war.

One need not expect that this will be the last word on the subject, nor the "definitive" history. The final word will never be spoken, and the "definitive" history is largely an ideal toward which we strive rather than a fact of accomplishment. But it is not too much to say that we have here an account of the great conflict superior to all its predecessors and its contemporaries in nearly every respect.

A History of the Great War. By John Buchan. Four volumes. Houghton Mifflin Co.

HAZLITT'S BIOGRAPHY

By Raymond M. Weaver

MR. HOWE describes his book as "an attempt to present in clear outline, and with reasonable attention to detail, a narrative of what has been termed the 'rather imperfectly known life' of a great English man of let-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ters". One method of biography is to expose the subject of one's labors, in the predicament of Saint Simeon Stylites, on the top of a towering column — a dot above the triumphant perpendicular pronoun. Mr. Howe eschews such practices. "I have thought it better not to recast the narrative in my own words", he says in the preface, "but to present it as far as possible in those of the various witnesses. If this method has disadvantages, of which I am conscious, it will be found also, I hope, to have certain advantages, not the least of which is that everything which appears in this book bears its own authority, good or less good, on its face." Such is Mr. Howe's end, and such his means. The result is a wholly admirable book. It is difficult to determine which to admire most: the modesty of Mr. Howe's pretensions or the magnitude of his achievement.

Not until nearly a century after his death has Hazlitt been made the subject of an adequate biography. He was too genuine ever to make any concessions to popularity. "Blackwood's", that did its relentless best to damage him, explained: "He stands with his back turned on the whole writing world, and need not therefore be surprised to get an occasional kick or two." "Blackwood's" and other powerful contemporaries certainly had enough potency in their kicks to harm Hazlitt's work and reputation. But Hazlitt's imperfect recognition even up to the present day is in better part explained by the peculiar blend of his genius. The versatility of his gifts and the fundamental paradox of his nature have tried the sympathies of his most ardent champions. Hazlitt's first book, it must be remembered, was "An Essay on the Principles of Human Action" — a book by a metaphysician for metaphysicians. His early ambition to perfect himself in the art of tightrope walking was soon relinquished for portrait painting in the manner of Titian. And as painter Hazlitt cannot be lightly dismissed. He is chiefly remembered, however, as a man of letters. But in this capacity he wrote not only "Table Talk" and "The Spirit of the Age", but also the "Liber Amoris". Few men have been able to forgive him in both of these extremes. The softheaded find his criticisms misanthropic; the stouthearted find him in his excesses of autobiography silly and sentimental. Hazlitt possessed not only a *cœur sensible* that would have set Rousseau's in sympathetic palpitation, but also a scalpel-like critical insight worthy of Schopenhauer or Montaigne. In the eighties Stevenson made his discovery that "we are mighty fine fellows, but we cannot write like William Hazlitt". But when confronted with the "Liber Amoris" he gave up the idea of writing a biography of Hazlitt: a curious hesitation that has given to Hazlitt's name a distinction for scandal it in no wise merits. One of the many virtues of Mr. Howe's book is its lowering of Hazlitt from this bad eminence. Hazlitt had the courage of his sentimentality and of his merciless insight. And to this he owes both his unpopularity and his power.

Mr. Howe certainly has his own judgments upon Hazlitt, but he has austerely kept them to himself. Rather has he chosen to present the evidence from which his judgments are drawn. In 430 pages he offers us all the documents available that he has thought relevant to the story of Hazlitt's life. The biography is neither "critical", nor "creative", in any obvious sense, though subtly it is both. Mr. Howe has spared no pains to make his rec-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ord complete, and his research has brought to light considerable discoveries. Yet there is in his book not the least parade of erudition, or boasting in discovery. Hazlitt is revealed in the record of his deed, his utterances, and the variety of reactions he inspired in those whose lives he touched. And he touched a remarkably interesting group. Charles and Mary Lamb, Coleridge, the Wordsworths, Keats, Leigh Hunt, Southey, Lockhart, Jeffrey, Landor, and Haydon are among those vividly contributing to the portrait.

The result is not a weary chronicle, but a rich presentation of a great man and a great age achieved by what is essentially the method of drama. Each of the many notable characters in Mr. Howe's book speaks in his own native voice, and character is indicated not by exposition of the biographer but by the interaction of character upon character. Mr. Howe has gathered the material, selected, and arranged. Only that. And he will live hereafter in the eternity of Hazlitt's fame.

The Life of William Hazlitt. By P. P. Howe. George H. Doran Company.

SNOW STORM AND ICE AGE

By Grace Hazard Conkling

THIS afternoon during a Massachusetts snow storm I read through for the second time the recently published book of poems by Raymond Holden, called "Granite and Alabaster". There are seventy of these poems. Two of them, "Rock Fowler" and "The Durhams", are dramatic narratives, and the rest are the varying moods of a thoughtfulness quite wonderfully blended with the concrete images used. Mr. Holden's detail is so delicately observed, so elusive to the untrained eye, that in his scrutiny of the forest spruces, in his enjoyment of the great grouse

> Who mounts a log and spreads his splendid tail
> And the ruffle at his throat,

in his description of the snow rain "fingering the sinking snow" or of those berries "full of the dark dusks of mountains", in a hundred phrases or lines with an ingratiating quality of their own, he comes perilously near losing his full effect. I think that he never does quite lose it; for his detail is at all times the distinctive imaginative expression of an ever developing idea. The most introspective of these poems, some of them restrained almost to austerity, burn with a kind of white glow. They are lit by pure imagination. There is not much talk of beauty. Abstractions heralded by capital letters do not appear to be necessary to Mr. Holden. I looked out of my window at a tracery of elm and maple boughs with tangled twigs just beyond the frost trees on the glass, and when I turned to the book again, there was an air of sympathy about the page although it was September there. This poet can be read by snow light. The very whiteness of it, that alabaster of the title, will reveal the warmth and color that come of things intensely imagined, as snow itself takes on rose or mauve from slanted sunrays. I mean that there are mountains of granite in this book, and there is snow, but the mountains are patient and the snow is not too cold.

These poems make no apparent effort to engage our interest. People no longer need reminding that the language of the best poetry is the nearest to ordinary speech. The more

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

casual the tone, the more direct the appeal: or so it is, very often.

I have come for a man's reason with hook and line
To trouble the swift water under the stones
Where wise trout flash their darkness . . .

is straightforward and direct and effective. I feel this stark simplicity and directness most successful in certain descriptions of men.

Rock Fowler is as free as wild things are
Of all but the fear of reaching for a star,
But there come moments to men so made free
When man seems an impossible thing to be.

Rock Fowler remembers a tramp who passed

Drunk as a goatfoot satyr down the road
Wearing a feather in his ruined hat.

There is reality in these pictures and impressions. I think of old Durham:

Old Durham, with some ice in heart and beard,
Stood in the doorway brushing off his boots.

I think of the carpenter who is in charge of the spring building:

The carpenter at the door-frame, grizzle-skinned
And gaunt, spits brown as far as he is able.

I wish that Mr. Holden would write a book of people, as Mr. Frost did in "North of Boston". But the poem about spring building goes on:

Not from the carpenter, but from the things
Men never know of men I look away . . .

He sees the old mountain. It is a mountain "in devout dissent from too much human triumph". A recurring note in these poems is doubt: a memory of the doubt that lives behind men's eyes. The mood is read into nature . . .

It is a doubtful noon under these trees.

Sometimes I am reminded of that other brave despair, in the lyrics by A. E. Housman.

But there is certainty of the beautiful moment at least, in the response of this poet to the world about him. He is fond of effects of light: and there are many lines with a radiance of their own: as

Through spruces lightened by a flash of birch.

There is the "wash of the twelve-silvered earth's long flight" in another. And in the last poem of the book, that interesting and closely studied story of the Durhams, a white doe roams the forest, appears, disappears:

A slim white thing, made as if out of breeze
That carries snow.

With all this pallor of snow and silver, even with the valley "full of moon", the book is not cold. Rather, it is a book to fire the imagination and warm the heart with interpreted beauty. It is snow storm proof.

The poems of Professor John Erskine seem to me less qualified to keep out the cold. This most wise and brilliant scholar, this stimulating critic and teacher writes a prose more genial than his poetry. Is it because of the subject matter, the love of old tales reflected in so much of this writing? Is it the Greek restraint? Is it perhaps that imagination is not here the comrade of intellect? These poems now collected from previous volumes of verse, with the addition of some not before published, seem the work of conscious brain supported by scholarship. Their deliberation and their lack of invention keep them far indeed from the mood of the moderns; from the improvisations of certain young writers who call Professor Erskine, master.

I think quite naturally of Charles A.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Wagner's "Poems of the Soil and Sea". Alfred A. Knopf of the class of 1912, Columbia University, publishes each year that book by an undergraduate which is judged most worthy of the honor. He has just brought out Mr. Wagner's poems, forty-five of them, and very interesting they are. Here is one:

> Each year ten thousand people ride
> In summer to the country side;
> They come in silk and satin gown,
> Treading the lovely woodland down,
> So that a farmer lad must creep
> In shame behind his careless sheep,
> So that the stars rain in the dew
> A tearful silver retinue,
> So that the valley looking up
> With hotel lights within its cup
> Asks God for simple folk again
> Who take their bread and butter plain.

The poem (numbered twenty-eight) about the farmers, has a convincing irony. There are musical lyrics about ships and harbors. I wish that Mr. Wagner would keep on singing these. I wish he would not talk about the "eternal Vast" as he does in a poem (number forty-one) no doubt sincere, but surely less successful than his lines about the sea, or than the pagan song with autumn leaves in it which begins

> When life has had enough of me.

Genevieve Taggard's book of lyrics is called "For Eager Lovers". The title given a group of poems in the book, "The Way Things Go", might have been at least equally descriptive. There is perhaps no clue in either title to the secrets of music understood and practised by this writer. She is genuinely original in her musical effects. Her imagination too is to be trusted. It was a pleasure to read "Talking Water" and find that faun again. "Spring Touch" has the line

> The wobbling lambs are tasting milky weeds,

a line at once fanciful and accurate. But the best poem in the book is not about spring. It is called "Ice-Age". If I appear to be unduly influenced by the season (it is still snowing . . .) I must plead that from the first line

> Noiselessly the planets will blow by

to the final frozen silence, I hear in this poem a music of curious-voweled words, often deliberately antiphonal, which seems to me a real achievement. "Ice-Age" is powerfully conceived, and its lyrical contrasts in color and movement are spontaneous and interesting. Here is a tone poem about silence: an unusual and quite lovely improvisation.

Granite and Alabaster. By Raymond Holden. The Macmillan Co.
Collected Poems. By John Erskine. Duffield and Co.
Poems of the Soil and Sea. By Charles A. Wagner. Alfred A. Knopf.
For Eager Lovers. By Genevieve Taggard. Thomas Seltzer.

CHEKHOV'S SMILE

By Alexander Kaun

AMIABLE, patient, kindly, charitable both in word and in deed, Anton Chekhov produced the impression of an optimist. The casual visitors who called at Chekhov's Crimean villa — sentimental ladies, romantic youths, provincial teachers, self-satisfied merchants, bragging officers, and every other variety of the classes above the inarticulate submerged — found in the host a shy gentleman, smilingly listening to prepared soliloquies, smilingly enduring lengthy monologues and highfalutin queries. And not only these went off with the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

conviction that they had just parted with the happiest man on earth. Even the keen eyed Kuprin, who had known Chekhov for a long time and seemingly well, was misled by the quiet smile. In his "Reminiscences" Kuprin emphasizes Chekov's optimism, his belief in Russia's becoming a constitutional state within one decade, his confidence in the progressive growth of his orchard, his faith in a better life after two or three hundred years.

Precisely. An optimism deferred. In his "Uncle Vanya", "The Three Sisters", and in many other plays and stories, Chekhov sounds this motive of hope in a better future. "After two or three hundred years" is the normal consolation of his weary, futile, charmingly futile, characters. What if the present is horrible, if our dreams are shattered, our hopes thwarted, our human dignity trampled under foot by the powers that be, our individuality distorted and mutilated by prescribed conventions and rules? "Our suffering will be transformed into joy for those who are to live after us" ("The Three Sisters"). We are performing a sacrificial mission on earth. Future generations will profit by our unhappiness, by our chagrin and disappointments, by our mistakes and futilities.

But this is mockery! Who wants to be a sacrificial victim? Who would not echo Ivan Karamazov's outcry: "Surely I haven't suffered, simply that I, my crimes and my sufferings, may manure the soil of the future harmony for somebody else"? The more one dips into Chekhov, the surer one grows as to the conviction that his deferred optimism amounted to an amiable gesture, that it was equivalent to the smile with which he suffered the effusions of his visitors. Chekhov despised compromise of any sort, particularly with oneself. Of a sharp, analytical eye, he could not help seeing through and exposing all quack panaceas, illusory faiths, optimistic narcotics. For a short time he embraced Tolstoy's faith. Self-perfection, non-resistance, contempt for civilization, and similar Tolstoyan notes can be traced in Chekhov's early works ("The Bet", "A Tedious Story", and others). One recalls that Tolstoy arrived at his faith after a period of profound pessimism which prompted him to suicide. But the faith that saved Tolstoy proved too thin for Chekhov. He soon rejected it, and attacked it time and again as narrow and undignified. Tolstoy's idea that man should simplify his life, should be satisfied with little, brought forth the dictum of one of Chekhov's characters that, on the contrary, the whole world is not sufficient for the demands and needs of man. The inmate of "Ward Number Six" stated emphatically that he was human, hence could not practise non-resistance, but had to respond and to "react to pain with cries and tears, to villainy with indignation, to nastiness with revulsion". Chekhov postulated man's need of joy, beauty, expanse, and freedom — at once, not in a remote future. "I believe", says one of his heroes, "that the coming generations will live better and finer; our experience will be at their service. But, don't you see, one wishes to live independently of the future generations, and not only for them. Life is given but once, and one should like to spend it vigorously, intelligently, beautifully."

Chekhov's Russia was in great need of such admonitions, especially the intelligentsia, at the latter part of the nineteenth century. Pseudo-Tolstoyan passivists and non-resisters, on one side, and whining self-negators and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

self-flagellators, on the other, composed the bulk of the intelligentsia during the eighties and the larger part of the nineties. Chekhov found himself outside of all groups and parties, alone and impartial, and therefore condemned by the leading Russian critics as criminally objective. "I am not a liberal", we read in one of his "Letters", "not a conservative, not a believer in gradual progress, not a monk, not an indifferentist. I should like to be a free artist and nothing more. . . . I hate lying and violence in any form. . . . Pharisaism, stupidity and despotism reign not in merchants' houses and prisons alone. I see them in science, in literature, in the younger generation. . . . That is why I have no preference either for gendarmes, or for butchers, or for scientists, or for writers, or for the younger generation. I regard trademarks and labels as a superstition. My holy of holies is the human body, health, intelligence, talent, inspiration, love, and the most absolute freedom — freedom from violence and lying, whatever form they may take. . . ."

With such an ambitious program Chekhov was bound to suffer bitter disappointment all his life. Official Russia was permeated with violence, intellectual Russia presented a chaos of labels and 'isms, while the large majority of the people was steeped in misery, superstition, and vulgarity. Than Chekhov no one, not even Gogol, had a keener eye and a deeper hatred for the commonplace and the trivial. These he discovered (and pilloried, in his objective, smiling way) wherever he turned, in every phase and walk of life, amid all social strata. Reigning Philistia stifled him, drove him into retirement and indifference. "It is essential in this world to be indifferent," we read in his "Let[illegible] assumed a smile, that scree[illegible] which he hid himself from the [illegible]ing street, from fat maudlin [illegible] from politicians, from Kuprins. [illegible] characteristic of his jealously impersonal art that he found himself dissatisfied with Dostoyevsky, because he was "indiscreet"!

It is only in his "Letters" and in his "Note-Book" that he occasionally cries out against the surrounding banality and pettiness. "There are moments when I completely lose heart. For whom and for what do I write?" This he writes to A. Suvorin, the most hated man in intellectual and liberal Russia, which fact speaks volumes for his solitude. It is such strokes as the one just quoted that suggest the sadness and despondence which lurked behind that smile, the autumnal smile of Chekhov. A pessimist, a profound pessimist, temperamentally as well as mentally, was Anton Pavlovich Chekhov. What else can we say of a man, knowing as we do his sincerity and hatred of pose and sham, who at the age of twenty-two wrote in a letter:

> Life is grey, there are no happy people to be seen. Life is a nasty business for everyone. When I am serious I begin to think that people who have an aversion for death are illogical. So far as I understand the order of things, life consists of nothing but horrors, squabbles, and trivialities mixed together or alternating!

Reminiscences of Anton Chekhov. By Maxim Gorky, Alexander Kuprin, and I. A. Bunin. Translated by S. S. Koteliansky and Leonard Woolf. B. W. Huebsch.

Tales of Chekhov. Translated by Constance Garnett. Thirteen volumes. The Macmillan Co.

Letters of Anton Chekhov to His Family and Friends. The Macmillan Co.

Note-Book of Anton Chekhov. Translated by S. S. Koteliansky and Leonard Woolf. B. W. Huebsch.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RECENT BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

IF there is anything you want to know about Florida you will find the information painlessly administered in "Sun Hunting" by Kenneth L. Roberts (Bobbs-Merrill). It is a collection of gay little sketches as full of truth as they are of slang. They describe the time killing methods of society folk, those who "part their names on the side", and the hotels where, with reasonable economy, one can manage on fifty dollars a day. Nor is the humble "tin canner" omitted, the man from Michigan or Minnesota or New Jersey who packs his lares and penates into a Ford and starts south, sun hunting. The book has items of especial interest also for those who are planning not to go to Florida this year, for there can be nothing pleasanter than sitting before a weak radiator on a blustery day and reading about the mosquitoes in Miami.

Every once in a while we come across a biography that "hits the spot". It eschews dates, early youth, education, marriage, death of mother, first years in London, etc.—being rather a chunk of history, a bit of analysis, a dash of philosophy, all seasoned with a permeating, pungent sauce of slightly-out-of-focus photography. The result is a literary hash as agreeable as mysterious, as nutritious as varied. "George Gissing" by May Yates (Longmans, Green), though subtitled with the odious appellation, "An Appreciation", is impartial, just incoherent enough to be interesting, and omits enough about Gissing to arouse desire for investigation. That, after all, is the supreme test of a biography: whether it stirs interest to such a pitch that nothing will suffice but a more detailed knowledge of the person under consideration.

In writing "Nerves and Personal Power" (Revell) D. Macdougall King never forgets that the average mental age is between twelve and fourteen years. In fact, he frequently assumes that those statistics are too generous and addresses himself to an audience of morons. He proceeds from a careful and doubtless accurate study of the nervous system to an elaborate treatise on the moral necessity for control of the instincts — a Pollyanna version of very diluted Freudianism.

Tea parties and khedives, Irish questions and wizards, Alpine climbing and Boches; pay your money and take your choice. For though moderate exaggeration to state that in "The Adventure of Living" (Putnam) John St. Loe Strachey touches upon every subject in the Encyclopædia Britannica, its all embracing character is astonishing. Officially designated an autobiography, it is more often entertaining, illuminating gossip about poets, pundits, and politicians, ages entombed, or still stalking through London — the purposefully rambling discourse of one now bard, now imperialist-republican journalist. The Anglophobe will brand portions of the volume propaganda.

D. H. Lawrence in his fiction — that made successful by persecution and that which escaped this advertisement — has given his readers constant re-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

minders of what he believes should be won from life. He has conveyed his message by the joy of those characters who revolt against conventions and by the sufferings of those who are docile. "But", one can almost hear him say, "while these are my beliefs, they cannot stand without support. The Philistines need more reason than the attainment of joy. Away with æsthetics; on with science." So now we have "The Fantasia of the Unconscious" (Seltzer), wherein the specific conduct for the realization of life's greatest possibilities is bedded in a pseudo-scientific upholstery that will probably fool no one. It may be unfair to charge Lawrence with concocting these reasons, but it is incomprehensible that his philosophy did not mature until these "unconscious fantasia" became "scientific" phenomena. The cart was built through years of experience; the horse was purchased over night in the hope that it might drag the cart before the eyes of more people. In these automotive days, the propelling force could have been hidden without exciting wonder, and Lawrence would not have been forced to parade his ludicrous animal before a most attractive wagon. His science, we fear, is more mixed than the above metaphors.

George Wharton Edwards has done much for the lover of London — for him who loves the city as a result of experience less than for him who loves it through literature and dreams. He has sifted the sights of the old English town, sifted them carefully and well. The sights that stayed in his sieve he has thrown aside with a casual phrase or two, but those bits of the rambling capital which leaked through he has saved for the readers of his "London" (Penn). So many persons have filled so many volumes with descriptions of this old place that it is incredible a new explorer could bring such an alluring freshness to such a big guidebook. But Mr. Edwards has taken the tiny corners and adorned them with pressing invitation. Throughout the de luxe volume, exceptionally well bound even for a special edition, appear water color and crayon sketches of here, there, and everywhere in the town. They, too, are Mr. Edwards's work, almost on the plane of merit won by the prose. Take away from London everything Baedeker has found, and there will be still the crannies that delighted this observer.

"From Seven to Seventy" by Edward Simmons (Harper) is the autobiography of one of those favored of the gods who live and die young in spirit. When ideas came to him, they were consummated in paintings and dismissed from his mind: thus one finds almost no reflections, either on life or painting, in his book. Nor does one learn much of his personal and emotional life. This is disappointing, and rather strange; one marvels at the reticence of a man who, in summing up his life, is content to reveal only its circumstances and not its mainspring — himself. But the vivid detailing of these unusually varied circumstances almost compensates for the omission; from the Old Manse made famous by Hawthorne to the Players, from California in the seventies to the art student's Paris, Mr. Simmons seems always to have become part of an environment at the time of its greatest interest. From seven to seventy his joy in life is unfailing; he is never bored — nor, in his book, boring.

"Streets and Shadows" (Moffat, Yard) is the expression of a simple,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

direct, and forceful personality reacting to city life. Without hurry or loss of time, without straining after effect, with an almost terrible economy of words Mercedes de Acosta gives thumbnail impressions as pointed as a church steeple in rhythms as broken as the sky line of New York. Evidently a disciple of Whitman, she has managed to evade the prolixity that so often ruined that master's efforts at self-realization. When she tries rhyme she is not herself and manages to be ridiculous. In the midst of a description of some city scene, barren and solidly square, comes a poetic figure like the sweep of mist across the hard foreheads of skyscrapers. A few of the titles of the pieces will give some idea of the poet's leaning — "Song of Fifth Avenue", "Litany of Hands", "For Rent", "Newspapers", "A Bird Is Like Freedom". There are two poems called "New York" and one named "Manhattan".

There is inspiration, sanity, and much wisdom in Angelo Patri's "Child Training" (Appleton). The book is made up of a number of concise, chatty essays full of significant incident. They deal with children at home and in the school and are invaluable in the help they can render parents and teachers in understanding the spirit and soul as well as the mental and bodily needs of the child. Particularly lovely is the little essay on Lincoln. It is without reservations that we enthusiastically recommend this book.

An interesting phase of earlier American history is narrated with plenty of color and detail in Henry E. Chambers's "Mississippi Valley Beginnings" (Putnam). It recounts "the early history of the earlier West in outline", beginning with the Valley as a wilderness and the primitive ways of travel, Indian trails and *pirogues*, from La Salle and d'Iberville to the bursting of the "Mississippi Bubble", and the start of the English westward advance. Then we have the Valley during the Spanish domination, during the American Revolution, and from the Louisiana Purchase to post-Civil War days when the history of "Valley" west ends with the beginning of the "Prairie" west. The writing is vivid: there is an index, maps and illustrations, one a picture of a steamboat race on the Mississippi. It seems a pity that the average American reader who might be expected to enjoy a colorful and historically accurate narrative of this kind, is only too apt to prefer watered fiction with a similar "background" interest in the adventure magazines.

Hard riding; the night, and a galloping horse on the plain —

Henry Herbert Knibbs's "Saddle Songs" (Houghton Mifflin) are full of the rhythmic beat of hoofs; his lines gallop along, now in taut, nervous, tight reined metre, now lazily shambling with a slow laughter under their nonchalance. One feels in the man a complete and whole souled identity with the things about which he writes — the cowboys, the mesa trails, the canyons, the coyotes. Out of this crystal experience he has chipped many jeweled lines, sharp with western starlight, the creak of saddle leather, the warm steam of horses. It is a pity that so much of his verse bears the standardized "western" stamp, for this poet has a sensitive inner quick to which he should be devoutly and unequivocally faithful.

An apparently impartial and illumi-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nating discussion of present day conditions in the land of the Communist is to be found in "Industrial Revival in Soviet Russia" by A. A. Heller (Seltzer). The author calls attention to the fact that the Russian Revolution was one of the most gigantic upheavals in history, that it is not yet over and may not be over for years to come, but that it has turned from the destructive to the constructive stage, so that we may expect the gradual regeneration of Russia under Soviet rule. The mistakes of the Soviet government, contends Mr. Heller, must be judged in the light of the vastness of the transformation it has undertaken; we must not be too zealous in "discovering" evils that its own papers have called attention to repeatedly; and we must be prepared to acknowledge that, whatever blunders may have been made, conditions in Russia, outside of the famine areas, are better now than they were under the Tsars.

Emerson's dictum that "there is, properly, no history, only biography", is well exemplified in James Ford Rhodes's volume, "The McKinley and Roosevelt Administrations" (Macmillan). Those twelve years of swiftly moving incidents are spread before us in the deeds, the characters of the big men of the time. Mark Hanna, William J. Bryan, John Hay, Elihu Root, William H. Taft, the financiers Morgan, Rockefeller, Carnegie stand revealed. Furthermore, it appears that McKinley outshone the others, because he was a typical American; Roosevelt because he was not. McKinley was an ultra-refined composite; Roosevelt was individual, separate, distinct. Through these men, the Spanish-American War, the coal strike of 1902, the building of the Panama Canal, the Russo-Japanese peace conference, the prosecution of the trusts, the panic of 1907 are made to live again. A reading of this book provides a delightful way of reviewing events so recent as with difficulty to appear already historical.

After a chapter or so of "Our Southern Highlanders" (Harper), one also tilts back one's chair and begins spinning yarns with Horace Kephart's Appalachian mountaineers. The humor in the dialogues is contagious, and the carefree temperament of the people well brought out by the easy conversational style. This book, an enlargement of a previous edition, combines adventure with a study of mountain life which is both readable and of much value.

It is a pity that the jacket leads one to expect so much from the work of Cale Young Rice. "Mihrima" (Century) is didactic and in the ancient manner, yet one would forgive much to the evident sincerity of these pieces had not its author been extravagantly hailed by an English critic (?) as "the most distinguished master of Lyric utterance in the New World". The most immediate discovery that the reader makes is that he belongs emphatically to the old world not only in space but in time. Nowadays one may not read a monologue entitled "A Chicago Red" in the section "Lurid Lives" without thinking how Sandburg would have done it. Cale Young Rice says the thing that the Red might say and it is a sneer. The "distinguished master" should say the thing the Red feels and cannot say. Otherwise where is the difference between art and journalism? On this hangs all the argument between old and new schools of poetic expression. On this Mr. Rice fails. In the free rhyming poems in the section "Evocations" and in some of the "Etchings", the line is

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hard, the poet escapes his lushness and assumes a character of his own instead of being the echoer of the past, or assuming the stiff poses into which his pretensions to interpret lives to whose secret he has no clue throw him. The title poem, a play in one act, after leading carefully up to a dramatic situation suddenly abandons it with a pointless miracle.

Doubtless no foreigner who comes to our shores is in his heart more difficult to Americanize than our brother the Englishman. He may adopt our ways and become almost indistinguishable from us, but deep down and ineradicable is his love for the tight little island and his belief in her superiority. For the Englishman at home and abroad Ernest Rhys has edited this collection, "The Old Country" (Dutton), "a book of the love and praise of England", made up of verse and song and prose quotations that picture her mellow beauty, her hallowed traditions, and her quiet places.

Dignity of bearing, grace of diction, and charm of voice would seem to be the essential virtues of a great character, according to Morris Schaff's "Jefferson Davis, His Life and Personality" (Luce). Of course, the supreme virtues of being well born and "a gentleman and a soldier" are assumed in anyone who aspires to that high estate. The author has made a desperate attempt to write this biography in the grand old style but he has achieved nothing more than a maudlin sentimentality punctuated by outbursts of ecstatic adoration.

"Human Character" by Hugh Elliot (Longmans, Green) is a collection of psychological "observations" which not only makes interesting reading but is likely to be of considerable practical value to the writer of fiction, inasmuch as it analyzes, so far as is now possible, the rules which govern conduct and the probable results on given types of character of particular trains of circumstance or emotion. For the ordinary reader a study of the book is almost as fascinating as the old game of giving oneself an intelligence test, though its net result, somewhat painful, is to let us "see oursel's as others see us".

Not everyone will appreciate a book which develops the "bright simplicity and domesticity . . . the unvarying humor (?) of an English parsonage" as dwelt upon in the pages of Percy Lubbock's "Earlham" (Scribner). Yet those who have a feeling for the detail of a happy and leisurely life, in which living takes on something of the quality of an unaccustomed art, will no doubt enjoy these impersonal memories, so happily mingling the narative of actual events and the fancies and reflections to which they give rise. "Earlham" is emphatically not a book for one who runs while reading, for all that its charm is genuine and sincere. Only the statement that "Everybody at Earlham talked well . . ." wakens a faint doubt. Such conversational perfection seems an impossibility, even in an English clerical home.

"The Life of Antonio Fogazzaro" by Tommaso Gallarati-Scotti (Doran) is, indeed, what its American publishers term it: "a spiritual biography"! Its author, described by Fogazzaro as "the person best qualified to write of me after my death", has patently "endeavored to write the story of a man's soul . . . the tragedy of one in search of God . . . a history and not a eulogy" — and has succeeded. Serious,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

honest, both favorable and strongly unfavorable, this study makes live again Antonio Fogazzaro, brought to breath by the gentle hand of his favorite friend. As a book of critical theories, too, the book has large values. It is beautifully translated by Mary Prichard Agnetti, the translator of some of the novels of this, possibly the greatest Italian fictionist between Manzoni and D'Annunzio, and one called "the last of the greatest Catholics of his century".

Macmillan has brought out a new one volume edition of Sir James George Frazer's "The Golden Bough". Sir James has succeeded in compressing the original twelve volume work into a little over seven hundred pages. In this abridgment he has neither added new matter nor altered the views expressed in the last edition. In fact, he claims that new evidence has turned up since that time to prove to him he was originally right in his interpretation of magic and religion. The book takes in everything from the customs of aboriginal natives to the derivation of words. It is one of the most complete studies of human nature and development in existence. The new volume is especially inviting because of its singleness, good printing, and attractive makeup. Sir James has a style that leads the reader on and on through mazes of beautiful writing and absorbing matter. Here is a book that has more culture and learning packed into it than anything outside the Encyclopædia Britannica.

"Great Pirate Stories", collected by Joseph Lewis French (Brentano), is a rather dull anthology of buccaneer yarns. The tales included are extracts from larger books like Esquemeling's "The Buccaneers of America" and "Tom Cringle's Log". Apparently Mr. French had no particular plan in regard to the nature of the stories. They are a mixture of truth and fiction, mainly truth. While the truth is exciting enough in action, it makes dull reading in context. In picking up the book we rather expected to find a collection of good pirate fiction. Instead we find passages from the Indian Antiquary and Defoe. The entire book has more of an air of research and textbookishness than any collection of pirate stories should have. Probably the most exciting thing about it is the cover, drawn by Waugh. Here the pirates actually get a chance to do the deeds for which they are buried in words between the covers.

Ernest Peixotto has succeeded in spreading bits of color throughout his latest travel book — "Through Spain and Portugal" (Scribner) — but his insistence on emphasizing buildings as the outstanding features of the visited countries forbids his popularity among persons who prefer atmosphere to architecture. Enough travelers have written of the intangible treasures of these lands to assure one who has never been there that surprisingly different atmosphere does pervade the countries. Too seldom do the materialistic eyes of Peixotto find it. He sees the stones as bits of edifices, not as the possessors of sermons.

The self-abnegation of those souls who devote themselves to the beneficent work of making life bearable for the world's afflicted, wakes a chord of wistful admiration in the hearts of even the crassest materialists. Winifred Holt, whose book "The Light Which Cannot Fail" (Dutton) was published on the day of her marriage, has given the best of her life to re-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

claiming the blind and making them useful members of society and the stories of her endeavors form an intensely appealing record.

Louise Driscoll has found the title for her new book of verse in an Egyptian legend that tells how after death the soul is escorted across the desert by the jackal to a mysterious heaven called "The Garden of the West" (Macmillan). This title poem, a dialogue between a Jackal and a Butterfly, done in stiff and uneven rhyme, is the least effective poem in a book that is, on the whole, successfully evocative of very tender atmospheres in its handling of various aspects of death. "Nausicaa" is full of fresh wistfulness and wondering regret. There is pathos in "Exit — the Fool". "Roses" is a free rhyming piece that is far better than its name would lead one to suspect. In the poem "Rain" occur the lines,

My heart will still be longing for a thin brown valley,
And low hills furrowed where timid sheep go
Over fields of asphodels and strange flowers blowing.
I will be remembering the fields I used to know. . . .

that startle the ear and the heart to reminiscence, but are so highly successful that one looks for more of them.

Mary Caroline Crawford has depicted the days of the latter part of the nineteenth century in Boston, with conscientious detail. Her book will be of interest primarily to the Boston "oldtimer" and the local historian, although the amusing anecdotes and descriptions have a universal appeal. The abolitionists, the Boston Fire, the old theatrical lights, the episode of Brook Farm, and the visit of Dickens are discussed in a most interesting way. The book is permeated by a civic pride which, perhaps due to Sinclair Lewis, we associate with the booster spirit of a more western atmosphere. Most non-Bostonians will be apt even to feel a pang of envy that their city cannot boast a Wendell Phillips, a Whittier, and an Emerson. "Romantic Days in Old Boston" (Little, Brown) is unquestionably a most fitting book to reedit at the hundredth anniversary of Boston's incorporation as a city.

The bewildering contradictions in "The Return of the Middle Class" (Scribner) by John Corbin make it difficult to ascertain how and when and why Mr. Corbin believes the middle class will return or even just what elements constitute this ephemeral entity. The book lacks coherence and is devoid of an objective, which may all be well in a realistic novel but is rather unsatisfactory in a sociologic work. The author's intense Nordic complex further complicates his meaning. If, as Mr. Corbin contends, the hordes of immigrants (Slav, Mediterranean, etc.) lower the standard of living for decent Americans (Nordics), why should it be the mission of the middle class to act the part of official strikebreaker — as Mr. Corbin suggests — when these hordes use the only weapon they possess to raise their standard of living? By another curious quirk Mr. Corbin's class distinctions are determined by cultural qualifications; hence, he dumps the illiterate but prosperous merchant in the lower or working class and the fifteen-a-week college bred clerk in the middle class. Emotionally, psychologically, anthropologically, perhaps, this is so, but pragmatically, it is not.

In "William Dean Howells, A Critical Study" (Dutton), Delmar Gross

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cooke has given a full view of this writer as author, critic, and eminent figure in American letters. There is enough biography interpolated to show Howells the man, to explain his principles and prejudices, the influences and friendships that were felt in his work; but the volume is devoted mainly to a sympathetic but searching criticism of his writing. Howells's importance to the world of letters has always been recognized but he has heretofore been more talked of than read; it is likely that people will now take to reading books about him instead of by him.

"Literary hors d'œuvres" is the unoriginal description given "Essays at Large" (Doran) by the publishers of this Solomon Eagle (J. C. Squire) collection. It is the variegated aperitif found in some restaurants which is so ample and inviting that the diner frequently makes of it a complete meal. This can be done with "Essays at Large". The variety of subjects is great, though almost all are related to things literary, even though so indirectly as "Reading in Bed"; the thoughts are thought provoking, and the style has the familiarity of a cordial British cousin — which Mr. Squire is. All these factors induce uninterrupted consumption. A companion volume to this is "Books Reviewed" (Doran) which is written without the Eagle nom de plume. The critic darts in and out of the terrifying mass of world literature with a commendatory pat on the back here, a disparaging slap there, and a worthwhile comment everywhere. He is a combination of the pedantic, serious critic and the casual, intimate reviewer.

"The great adventure of Mankind" is a compelling theme for one who has the skill to flourish his brush over a world wide canvas. It has an irresistible fascination for H. G. Wells, who has painted again with vivid strokes the story of civilization in "A Short History of the World" (Macmillan). Those who shied away from the rather ponderous "Outline" will find in this later account all the thrill of a serial novel. Mankind, the hero, treads the brink of one catastrophe after another; is often defeated, impoverished, or enslaved for a while; but in the next chapter rises victorious again, just a little nearer to his goal. There is a merciful dearth of dates and battles, a not so merciful ignoring of the story of European artistic progress, and many philosophic and religious discussions. In addition to its copious and beautiful illustrations, the story is enlivened here and there, as might be expected, by the author's personal prejudices, pushing out through his cold historical intent.

The student who is unable to attend college and has no craving for the special amenities offered by a college course, can secure its educational equivalent by a judicious selection from the ever increasing number of books written by college professors on their special subjects. "Elements of Human Psychology" (Houghton Mifflin) by Professor Howard C. Warren of Princeton University is an exceedingly lucid exposition of the fundamental principles of psychology. Intended primarily for college students, its simple brevity and comprehensiveness make it valuable for the free lance scholar.

All that the Imagists have declaimed against, all that has been denounced in the preface to "The New Poetry" can be found in "The Thinker" by Stanton

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A. Coblentz (White). An introduction indicates that the author is conscious that his verses are of a type fallen into disrepute; he aims "to subject the truth to the vivid light of poetry". The first line in the book is

O stoic Thinker, mutely steeped in thought,

and much of the book is made up of long blank verse soliloquies of which "More Worlds to Conquer (Alexander the Great on his Death Bed)" and "Spinoza on his Excommunication" are typical. The poems contain much of those qualities of oratory which distinguish that art from poetry. But perhaps it's all a hoax.

A truly monumental piece of work is Paul Van Dyke's two volume history of "Catherine de Médicis" (Scribner). It combines a competent biography with an account of the politics of France for the period of her life. It was a troubled and complicated time when the foreign policies, the court intrigues, and the tragic struggles of the Huguenots make our present seem positively pastoral by contrast. Against this background Catherine stands, a dominant and impressive figure. Professor Van Dyke kindly tries to clear her of some of the evil deeds for which history blames her, but he does not hesitate to admit those for which there is any substantial proof whatever. They are many, but then a wicked queen is infinitely more interesting than a saintly one.

Real fables which leave their heroes shut out of heaven and hell differ from "Tomlinson" in being really merry. "The Soldier and Death", a Russian folk tale retold by Arthur Ransome (Huebsch), despite its sombre title and Slavic origin, is merry too. If the story has any deep symbolic meaning, the author has carefully avoided pointing it out, so the reader may enjoy his reading untroubled. But a fairy tale needs company, and this one is all by itself, in its own little book.

The lectures of Lafcadio Hearn on Rossetti, Swinburne, Browning, Morris, Meredith, Robert Buchanan, and Robert Bridges, have been selected and edited by Professor John Erskine from material originally preserved only in the lecture notes of Hearn's Japanese students at the University of Tokio. They are now issued under the title "Pre-Raphaelite and Other Poets" (Dodd, Mead). "Brilliant impressionism" has always been the convenient and apposite cliché to apply to Hearn's literary criticism. Here, in addition to that somewhat dubious characteristic, there is a penetration and an acumen and scholarship which have been less adequately recognized by those who have dismissed Hearn as one of the lost souls of nineteenth century romanticism. The simplicity of his diction is amazing. A wealth of illustration and of sound and graceful comment makes the volume delightful as an introduction either to Lafcadio Hearn or the Pre-Raphaelites — or both.

"In Memoriam" by Martin Feinstein (Seltzer) contains, besides the impressive and even noble title poem, which was awarded "The Nation's" Poetry Prize last year, two long poems the effectiveness of which is blurred by their allegorical nature; some rather flatfooted songs to Zion; and acute observations trenchantly worded in free verse. The author is at his best when, as in the poem "In Memoriam", his writing is based on the mental indignation and turmoil of emotions proceeding from personal, bitter experience.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

Compiled by Frank Parker Stockbridge in Cooperation with the American Library Association

The appearance close to the top of the list of "Fair Harbor", "Rough-Hewn", and "The Cathedral", and the total disappearance for the first time of last year's two fiction leaders, "Main Street" and "If Winter Comes", are the only changes of importance in the fiction score for January. When it comes to real popularity with the book borrowing patrons of the public libraries, the work of the veterans of the writing craft always commands the greatest following. There isn't listed this month the name of an author who is not a seasoned writer of pleasing tales.

There is a bit of a shock in the contemplation of the general list. For the first time since 1920, H. G. Wells and "The Outline of History" do not appear at the top. Instead, look who's here! Every day in every way, people are proving their belief in short cuts to happiness. Well, as Thomas Jefferson set it down in the Declaration of Independence, the pursuit of happiness is one of the inalienable rights of humanity. Let us hope that those who can't attain it from Coué may find it in the Book of Etiquette.—F. P. S.

FICTION

1.	Babbitt	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
2.	This Freedom	*A. S. M. Hutchinson*	LITTLE
3.	Fair Harbor	*Joseph C. Lincoln*	APPLETON
4.	Rough-Hewn	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT
5.	The Cathedral	*Hugh Walpole*	DORAN
6.	Certain People of Importance	*Kathleen Norris*	DOUBLEDAY
7.	The Breaking Point	*Mary Roberts Rinehart*	DORAN
8.	Robin	*Frances Hodgson Burnett*	STOKES
9.	One of Ours	*Willa Cather*	KNOPF
10.	Charles Rex	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM

GENERAL

1.	Self Mastery	*Emile Coué*	AMER. LIB. SERV.
2.	The Outline of Science	*J. Arthur Thomson*	PUTNAM
3.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
4.	Life and Letters of Walter H. Page	*Burton J. Hendrick*	DOUBLEDAY
5.	The Story of Mankind	*Hendrik Van Loon*	BONI
6.	The Mind in the Making	*James Harvey Robinson*	HARPER
7.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
8.	Outwitting Our Nerves	*Jackson and Salisbury*	CENTURY
9.	The Conquest of Fear	*Basil King*	DOUBLEDAY
10.	Etiquette	*Emily Post*	FUNK & WAGNALLS

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BOOKMAN'S LITERARY CLUB SERVICE

THE BOOKMAN presents the fifth instalment of its series of literary club programs. Believing that clubs will welcome an outline which combines range of subject with an authoritative understanding of the end to be achieved, the editors have brought together representative committees of authors, students, and critics to evolve for the use of women's clubs an outline which will contain both elements. The divisions of the series are: I. Contemporary American Fiction (see THE BOOKMAN for October, November, December, January); II. Contemporary American Poetry; III. Contemporary American Drama; IV. The Short Story. After contemporary American literature has been covered, programs on the historical background of our literature will be given and these will be followed by a survey of the English field.

The BOOKMAN programs are formed, not by the editors of this magazine but by a board of advice which has been organized to include names from various lines of literary thought in America, so that the result will represent no one group. The executive committee of advice is as follows: Mary Austin, the novelist; Dr. Arthur E. Bostwick, librarian of the St. Louis Public Library; Dr. Carl Van Doren, one of the editors of "The Century"; Hon. Maurice Francis Egan, diplomat and literary critic; Dr. John Erskine, president of the Authors Club and professor of English at Columbia University; Mrs. L. A. Miller, chairman of literature, General Federation of Women's Clubs; May Lamberton Becker, of the "Reader's Guide" of the New York "Evening Post"; Dr. Joseph Fort Newton, rector of the Church of the Divine Paternity, New York City; Booth Tarkington, the novelist; and Rose V. S. Berry, chairman of the fine arts committee, General Federation of Women's Clubs.

The editor of THE BOOKMAN and his advisers and associates will answer promptly and to the best of their ability any questions confronting any literary club. Such questions should be addressed "THE BOOKMAN'S Literary Club Service".

IN presenting a study program of present day poetry, the committee in charge has kept two ends constantly in view. The first was to show, as far as possible, all the different trends which make our modern American poetry so varied and interesting; the second was to combine these differing elements into some sort of ordered pattern which might be easily followed. For this reason, the poets whose work has been suggested for study have been placed in groups. These groups may be taken to indicate possible divisions. They are by no means exact, such exactness is out of the question, since the same poet may logically belong to two or three groups at once. In such a case, the type of his most pronounced work has been the determining factor. Had it been possible to make purely geographical divisions, the task would have been easier; in the case of certain poets this has been done, but it has not been possible in regard to others. Where no geographical grouping would fit, the groups have been formed according to psychological or æsthetic predilections.

A whole season's program was intended, and partly on this account it has been considered wise to include only those poets already well known to the public, as a longer program cannot possibly be undertaken if any real comprehension of the subject is to follow.

The committee wish it clearly understood that, in choosing the poets to be considered, every decision was made by ballot, the majority ruling.

The names of easily procurable books and magazine articles dealing with individual authors will be found listed after the works of the poets to which they refer. As a general bibliography the following books are suggested:

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Anthologies

The New Poetry. Harriet Monroe and Alice Corbin Henderson. MACMILLAN.

Modern American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HARCOURT, BRACE.

A Miscellany of American Poetry, 1919. HARCOURT, BRACE.

American Poetry, 1922. HARCOURT, BRACE.

References and Guides

Tendencies in Modern American Poetry. Amy Lowell. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.

The New Era in American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HOLT.

New Voices. Marguerite Wilkinson. MACMILLAN.

An Introduction to Poetry. Hubbell and Beaty. MACMILLAN.

Poetry in General

Convention and Revolt in Poetry. John Livingston Lowes. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.

A Study of Poetry. Bliss Perry. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.

The Principles of English Versification. Paull F. Baum. HARVARD.

Lyric Forms from France. Helen Louise Cohen. HARCOURT, BRACE.

American Rhythm. Mary Austin. HARCOURT, BRACE.

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN POETRY

Committee: Amy Lowell, chairman; Grace Hazard Conkling, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Carl Sandburg, Sara Teasdale, Louis Untermeyer.

New England Group

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The appreciation of poetry is a most personal matter. The following program represents the painstaking effort of the above group of distinguished poets and critics. It includes only names of living Americans, and most of the younger poets were omitted as not having yet won their spurs. When this program was submitted for approval to the executive committee, suggestions and emendations were many. In few cases did the comments of any one member of the executive committee agree with those of another. For this reason, we have decided to publish the program as originally outlined by the poetry committee, without change. The biographies and quotations from critical material have been added by the editors of* THE BOOKMAN, *and for these the poetry committee is not responsible.*

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

Collected Poems. MACMILLAN.
Roman Bartholow. MACMILLAN.

This preeminently psychological and dramatic poet is considered by many critics the most important of living American poets. Calm in his lyrics, slow moving even in his tense moments of drama, he is possessed of a sure technique, a grim understanding of human motive, and a combination of artistic determination and persistence. His literary reputation has been slow to build, but seems now to be solidly established.

Edwin Arlington Robinson was born at Head Tide, Maine, in 1869, and spent a somewhat retired and lonely boyhood in the same state. Although he studied for a time at Harvard, he was never graduated. He determined early to follow the career of a writer of poetry and to this end his entire life has been devoted. In New York his early years were not unlike those of most young poets. His struggles were bitter and he turned a hand to any job that came his way. Theodore Roosevelt recognized the genius in Robinson and aided him both by public acclamation and by practical assistance. The then president placed Robinson in the New York Customs House; but this sort of work did not long content the poet, who soon turned again to writing. In the winter months he now lives in New York City, where he sees a small group of friends, attends the theatre, and writes his poetry seldom. The summer months are working months for him. At the MacDowell Colony in Peterboro, New Hampshire, he accomplishes most of the work which he apportions himself for the year, mingling in the evenings with the other poets and artists who find this a retreat and a working place during the warm weather. Of late years Mr. Robinson has been much honored. His "Collected Poems" received the Pulitzer

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Prize. He was presented with a Lit.D. degree by Yale University in 1922. On his fiftieth birthday various of America's writers combined to honor him and published eulogistic accounts of his work. The Authors Club recognized him by popular vote and made him the first of a series of American writers concerning whose works they will issue critical monographs. A shy, dark, quiet man with a rich dash of humor, Mr. Robinson is modest and human. He is as definitely not a part of the furor of current literary life, as his work is not comparable with most of the surface journalistic writing of present day America.

"When most of the preceding generation were poeticizing in ornate and artificial numbers, he was the first to express himself in that hard and clear utterance which became part of our present technique and, later on, was adopted as one of the chief articles in the creed of the Imagists. He has already found direct disciples in poets like Joyce Kilmer (*vide* his 'Martin') and William Stanley Braithwaite ('Sandy Star' and other verses). Unperturbed by the battles over new forms and metrical innovations, he has gone on, like every first-rate artist, making old forms distinctive and definitely his own. His rhymes are brought in with a masterly ease, showing what rhyme, at its best, should be: a natural, musical punctuation. They flow, like his lines, as smoothly and pointedly as a sharp conversation." — *Louis Untermeyer in "The New Era in American Poetry".*

"He ferrets out the soul of humanity and turns it over and over with analytic interest, making his acute deductions and stabbing truths home to his readers with a phrase. His simplicity consists in resolving things to their original elements, of disdaining mawkishness, sentimentality, preconceived theories, and propaganda. He is an alchemist refining gold out of the chaos of modern life." — *"The Literary Spotlight" in* THE BOOKMAN.

"The contrast between Masefield and his greatest rival sonneteer, the American poet, Edwin Arlington Robinson, is — to a certain extent — the contrast between the Shakespearian and the Italian sonnet. Masefield shows fire; Robinson restraint. Masefield is exuberant; Robinson, subtle. 'Firelight' and 'Souvenir' illustrate Robinson's mature manner." — *Hubbell and Beaty in "An Introduction to Poetry".*

"It is idle to ask if the greatest poetry can be built upon such negative lines. Certainly, no one will ever go to Mr. Robinson's books to make a gay mood more gay, to fill himself with the zest and sparkle of life. These things Mr. Robinson has not to give. His poems do not invigorate; they mellow and subdue. But in our material day, the spirituality of Mr. Robinson's work is tonic and uplifting." — *Amy Lowell in "Tendencies in Modern American Poetry".*

REFERENCES:

An Introduction to Poetry. Hubbell and Beaty. MACMILLAN.

E. A. Robinson. Lloyd Morris. To be published by DORAN.

Tendencies in Modern American Poetry. Amy Lowell. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.

The New Era in American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HARCOURT, BRACE.

New Voices. Marguerite Wilkinson. MACMILLAN.

A Critical Fable. Anonymous. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.

Our Poets of Today. Howard Willard Cook. MOFFAT, YARD.

The Literary Spotlight. Anonymous. BOOKMAN, January, 1923.

A Bird's Eye View of E. A. Robinson. Amy Lowell. DIAL, February, 1922.

Edwin Arlington Robinson. John Drinkwater. YALE REVIEW, April, 1922.

ROBERT FROST

A Boy's Will. HOLT.
North of Boston. HOLT.
Mountain Interval. HOLT.

A masterful handling of the spirit of the New England hills and the psychology of their people makes Mr. Frost, in spite of the fact that his background is exceedingly sectional, one of the most vividly American of poets.

Although from generations of New England ancestors, and associated inseparably both in his life and his work with New England, Robert Frost happened to be born in San Francisco in 1875. At ten years he returned to the hill country. He studied at Dartmouth but did not take a degree. At various periods of his life he has worked at different trades, has several times been a teacher; but he chooses to be known as a farmer. For a time he remained in England, where his poems were first published. At present he lives with his wife and family on a small farm in Vermont. A part of each year he spends at Ann Arbor, where he does not teach but lives on the campus, accessible to those students who wish to consult him. Like Mr. Robinson, Mr. Frost does not care for the hurry and worry of literary New York. He prefers the peace of his Vermont

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

valley, near which live Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Sarah Cleghorn, and other determined artists and New Englanders. Frost is quiet spoken, with a fine head and iron grey hair. He is gentle, in the main; but occasionally his speech becomes bitterly incisive when he believes himself in contact with sham or pretense, particularly with reference to the art of poetry.

"The living poem is something that is felt first and thought out afterwards. 'It begins', Frost had said somewhere, 'with a lump in the throat; a home-sickness or a love-sickness. It is a reaching-out toward expression; an effort to find fulfilment. A complete poem is one where an emotion has found its thought and the thought has found the words.' In this sentence lies the explanation of Frost's persuasiveness and power. He has given emotion, thought and words such national flavor and freshness that no poet since Whitman has been more American and, in his very localism, more universal." — *Louis Untermeyer in "The New Era in American Poetry".*

"Mr. Frost writes down *exactly* what he sees. But, being a true poet, he sees it vividly and with a charm which translates itself into a beautiful simplicity of expression. He is an eminently sympathetic poet. He wins first by his gentle understanding, and his strong and unsentimental power of emotion; later, we are conquered by his force, and moved to admiration by his almost unapproachable technique. Still, his imagination is bounded by his life, he is confined within the limits of his experience (or at least what might have been his experience) and bent all one way like the wind-blown trees of New England hill-sides. After all, art is rooted in the soil, and only the very greatest men can be both cosmopolitan and great. Mr. Frost is as New England as Burns is Scotch, Synge Irish, or Mistral Provençal, and it is perhaps not too much to say that he is the equal of these poets, and will so rank to future generations." — *Amy Lowell in "Tendencies in Modern American Poetry".*

"As an example of good diction to which locality as well as character contributes flavor and quality, nothing can be better than the diction of Robert Frost. Mr. Frost is not merely a new craftsman, he is a new personal force deep-rooted in locality. He belongs somewhere — in rural New England. And from that physical and spiritual environment he draws his strength. We can hardly call his characters fictitious. For they are real. We know that they or their ghosts are all there, 'North of Boston' still. Poems like 'Blueberries' are fragrant with the scent of the New England countryside and full of the dry, delicious humor of the thrifty, quiet, kindly Yankee farmer. 'A Hundred Collars' is one of the most delightfully ironical poems in the whole of American literature." — *Marguerite Wilkinson in "New Voices".*

REFERENCES:

Friday Nights. Edward Garnett. KNOPF.

The New Era in American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HARCOURT, BRACE.

Tendencies in Modern American Poetry. Amy Lowell. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.

New Voices. Marguerite Wilkinson. MACMILLAN.

A Critical Fable. Anonymous. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.

Our America. Waldo Frank. BONI, LIVERIGHT.

Robert Frost. Carl Van Doren. CENTURY, February, 1923.

AMY LOWELL

Men, Women and Ghosts. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.

Can Grande's Castle. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.

Pictures of the Floating World. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.

Amy Lowell is a poet of amazing range, and a brilliant critic. Her colorful lyrics, her impassioned dramatic poems, her delicate adaptations of Chinese translations, and her swinging polyphonic prose, make her one of the most versatile of American writers; but this virtuosity does not limit her importance in each field which she enters. Her experiments have not dimmed her accomplishment.

A distant relative of James Russell Lowell, a sister of President Lowell of Harvard and of the astronomer Percival Lowell, Amy Lowell was born in Brookline, Massachusetts, in 1874. She was educated in private schools, and traveled much in Europe. About twenty years ago she decided to devote her life to poetry. For years she had been writing, but was not satisfied with the result. Miss Lowell is one of those writers who develop late. After a long preparation, her first poem appeared in "The Atlantic" in 1910. Since then her life has been an exceedingly active one. She works harder at her craft than do most bank presidents at their offices. Her efforts to aid young poets are unsparing and her critical ability has been of inestimable assistance, both in print and by conferences, in aiding the development of American letters during the last decade. A striking personality, the fact that she reads her poems superbly, and a forceful platform manner have made her lecture tours most successful. She is at present hard at work on a life of Keats and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

her collection of Keats manuscripts is probably the largest in the world. As honest in her speech as she is in her art, she has been and continues to be perhaps the most vivid influence in the development of American poetics.

"It is plain that Miss Lowell's range is the most obvious of her gifts. But it is not the greatest; she strikes single notes as sharply as she can sound large, experimental chords. When her collected works are some day appraised in a complete study of American poetry, it will be found that her vigor, matching her versatility, will have expressed the poet that is half-singer, half-scientist, and the groping, experimental period she helped represent." — *Louis Untermeyer in "The New Era in American Poetry".*

"No one can rightly evaluate Miss Lowell's work who will not accept the fact that she is always a conscious artist. She goes far afield, sometimes, for the materials of her poems. But she selects them with care. She uses the lives of people who live on New England farms today, or the lives of quaint swashbucklers who lived a century ago and half a world away. She shows pictures of strange and vivid things that she has seen in a wide and vivid world. She makes these pictures out of the juxtaposition of odd trifles with scents and hues and textures that she likes. And in her best work she gives us frosty designs in thought as clear as glass, flashing patterns of feeling as warmly colored as glossy skeins of embroidery silk — blue and purple and scarlet, silver and gold. She distills sensations that sting like fiery liqueur. She threads together impressions as frail as a flutter of old lace. She is a poet of vigorous, penetrative and incessantly communicative imagination." — *Marguerite Wilkinson in "New Voices".*

"The technique of these poems is that of the true modernist. The poet perceives the world keenly and sensitively: she presents it objectively to the reader. All the overtones of deep feeling, that *sine qua non* of poetry, are present, but they do not crowd into the poems in blurred comments and moralistic tag-endings. The poems are distinct and brilliant in their presentation of surfaces: but it is a dull reader indeed who does not feel the surge of emotion beneath . . . . Miss Lowell's career has been a steady rise, each volume holding old friends and winning new, and there is no sign that the crest has yet been reached." — *Royall H. Snow in "Amy Lowell, Sketches Biographical and Critical".*

REFERENCES:

The New Era in American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HARCOURT, BRACE.

New Voices. Marguerite Wilkinson. MACMILLAN.

An Anatomy of Poetry. A. Williams-Ellis. MACMILLAN.

Amy Lowell, Sketches Biographical and Critical. Richard Hunt and Royall H. Snow. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.

A Critical Fable. Anonymous. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.

Our America. Waldo Frank. BONI, LIVERIGHT.

Our Poets of Today. Howard Willard Cook. MOFFAT, YARD.

Amy Lowell: A Personality. Helen Bullis Kizer. NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, May, 1918.

New Verse and New Prose. W. M. Patterson. NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, February, 1918.

The Poetry of Amy Lowell. James W. Tupper. SEWANEE REVIEW, January-March, 1920.

Amy Lowell and the Pretorian Cohorts. Josephine Hammond. PERSONALIST. October, 1920.

Amy Lowell, Poet-Critic of Massachusetts Bay. Norreys Jephson O'Conor. LANDMARK, January, 1922.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FOREIGN NOTES AND COMMENT

English: A World Language

THE world needs a language. Invaluable time is lost, the hatred that springs from misunderstanding is engendered, the village spire patriotism that makes mopes of otherwise potentially decent people is fanned by and through the lack of an international medium of expression. The Esperantists and their rivals are merely the reactionary agnostics of the Babel Union. With the postwar Jews who would revive classical Hebrew, the Irish who would speak Gaelic, the Norwegians who would resurrect and revamp mediæval *Norsk*, the Flemish enthusiasts who would have the University of Ghent converted into a monument to their own precious, if rather flat and thick, tongue, the Bulgarians who would eliminate Russian, root, stock, and alphabet from their speech, it is different: they, each national group of them, are proud; and they have something to be proud of, for they have a literature. Those who would make an artificial language are hopeless; for they have no literature and cannot call one into being. They confuse, unconsciously it may be, the situation; and they squander their time in the attempt to puff the breath of life into an artificial language. They might as well try to make blood flow through an artificial limb. For between learning, say, Ido and Danish, this writer would prefer the latter task; it is easier. And Danish has something back of it; Ido doesn't even have anything in front of it.

The world has had a troublous time getting set for its language. The war seemed for a while merely to thicken the plot. Light began to dawn, however, the day the British pound went down. Or, as they expressed it anywhere within omnibus distance of the Bank of England, the day the dollar went up. That language leads which has the greatest commercial drive back of it. To speak English, then, is to command submissive attention. Never since the days of Beowulf has English been in such a favorable position to become the world language, that is, the common tongue when the seventy-odd nations of the earth come together in convention assembled. Any move that would tend to elevate English to this position should be welcomed by all intelligent people.

An excellent start has been made in Norway. Convinced that English speaking scientists would like to follow Scandinavian science more closely and appreciatively than can be done through the aid of non-English magazines, Martin L. Reymert of the University of Christiania, assisted by a formidable corps of colleagues at home and in Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Iceland, has undertaken to bring out a stately quarterly entitled "Scandinavian Scientific Review", published in English, and for the benefit of those who speak the language of Frederic Harrison and Gamaliel Bradford.

The plan is the very simplest: the article is written by the author in his mother tongue, and then translated. That is all; but nothing like this has ever been attempted before. It is symptomatic of Norwegian progressiveness, Anglo-Saxon predominance, and the cosmic urge in the direction

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of a universal language. May age never wither it, nor custom stall its infinite usefulness.

It is quite impossible to give an adequate account of the contents of No. 1, Vol. I of the "Scandinavian Scientific Review". It consists of 135 pages of exactly the same length as a BOOKMAN page, and narrower by only a quarter of an inch. The first article is devoted to the life and work of the late Alfred Lehmann, long professor of psychology at the University of Copenhagen, and is written by Anathon Aall, of the University of Christiania. Some of Lehmann's books have been translated into German (he was really the first student of Wilhelm Wundt), others into Hungarian, and others might well be done into English, particularly in view of the interest the contemporary world is taking in supernatural questions and the light he shed on them.

The major article (50 pages) is by Harald K. Schjelderup, professor of philosophy at Christiania, on the theory of relativity and its bearing on epistemology. Were it possible to whet the appetite of the reading public by superlatives, this would be the place to say that this is the first readable and rational presentation of Einstein in English. Out of Schjelderup's discussion emerges the notion that the scientists have got to come down from their pedestal of exact statements and take a "literary" attitude toward the world of seemingly real things. The scientist will tell you, for example, that there are 220 lines in Wordsworth which may be called poetry; the rest must be called labored prose. Who said so? Whether Wordsworth's lines are poetry or not depends on the temperament through which they are sighted. Whether the scientist's straight lines are straight and parallel, or curved and merely contiguous, depends on whether we are seeing straight, which, according to Schjelderup, Einstein is doing.

There follow two long articles which may be epoch making though, like much that is written in the field of pedagogy and psychology, they appeal to the present writer as heavy attempts to make horse sense asinine. One is on the weight of school children in the summer time, the other (by the editor, who need pay no attention to the adjacent observation, for the writer is an ignoramus on the subject) on a new elbow ergograph. Professor Pedersen of Copenhagen finds that children vary in weight, depending on whether they are out in the country and well fed, or in the school rooms eating municipal lunches. Were this not true, then an Einstein might well posit the thesis that the number of calories in watermelon equals the number in beefsteak. And as to that elbow ergograph, we all know that "elbow grease" is necessary even to a Beethoven. Further than that it is hard to go. But the article is well illustrated. There is a photograph of an electric device that measures the "pulls" in the fingers. The lady who stood for this has a fair arm. Her sleeve is not rolled up; it is merely abbreviated as sleeves were when war cut. And she has a quite noticeable wrist watch. This is all we see of her, and this is enough.

The final article is on the present status of psychological science in Great Britain and Ireland, a timely topic when the countries are taken together. The expression, however, is manifestly pre-De Valerian: Ireland is made to play no rôle in textbook psychology. Great Britain, it seems, now has seven journals devoted to psychology, and regret is expressed over

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the fact that she has lost Professor MacDougall to Harvard.

The best part of the quarterly is its book reviews — cultured, critical, full of versatility and vitality, diligent and intelligent. The spiritual standing of a nation may be determined by the worth of its book reviews. Norway is in the forefront of civilization. One review here calls for special attention: "Development of the Æsthetic Life, with Special Reference to Literary Interests", by Karl Bruhn. What prowling around in the products of the literary creators the author has done! He shows just what words and conceits the young man, the middle aged man, the old man, and the woman of all ages uses. It is enlightening. And yet, how Goethe disproves the principle of the whole idea! He wrote juvenile love poems when he was eighty, and philosophic cantos when he was not much over eight.

All honor, however, to the "Scandinavian Scientific Review"! Its initial number is mighty meaty — to use as banal an expression as the best columnist can at his worst. But it is the idea of the undertaking as such that is most deserving of consideration, and most worthy of laudation. For it is a beginning in the attempt to make English the world language. Let the Finn use his *Suomea* in writing to a distant mail order house if he feels that he can thereby show more clearly what article he desires. Let the Dutchman belabor his immediate family in *Hollandsch* if he wants to. Let the Swede read his Bible in *Svenska* if the King James Version seems strange. Let the Italian be married and buried in *Italiano* if any other tongue hurts his feelings. Let the Pole talk *Polskie* and the immigrant from Prague *Cechoslovácky* when with his kind. But let them all speak English, if only after a fashion, when dealing with men born and reared in countries not their own. Let the world adopt English as its language, and it will save, in an unbelievably brief span of time, as much as our participation in the world war cost us, which is $15.33 for every man, woman, and child in the entire world.

Of course, we always have to meet the reactionary in matters of this sort. He will contend that Norway has sold her birthright; that she is ashamed of her little country and her living language; that she wishes to get in line with the big people. He will point to Greece and shout that Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle were monolingual, and yet they reached the uttermost parts of the earth. They did, after a few thousand years, and that is too long. The situation is different now. If Plato were living today, the first thing he would do would be to learn English himself so that he could read it; the second would be to engage a competent translator. If this is not true, then Plato was disingenuous in his "State", and in some of his other works.

The Norwegians merely want to help; and like all other men — it is the most significant change that has come over modern thought — they have no objections to acquiring immortality while still alive. If only for moral reasons, the "Scandinavian Scientific Review" should be in every college library in this country, which would mean an American circulation of approximately ten thousand — in itself a statement that bewilders. Ten thousand "colleges" in the United States, and yet enough cases of illiteracy, arrested mental development, and fractured heads to babbittize artificial language clubs into being, and to keep them from becoming gone concerns!

ALLEN WILSON PORTERFIELD

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

From an Art Student in Vienna

IN this letter I want to describe my work with Professor Straud, whose theories on scenic art — the *dramadessinart* is the newly coined word we are using — will delight everyone who is following the new movements in the theatre. He has only five in his class, three of whom are at work constructing a model theatre — a practical working model about five feet deep in which we hope to try out our experiments. The tremendous expense of the materials, especially of all electrical equipment, is almost beyond belief. The basic construction of the stage proper, the cyclorama and proscenium, are already up. The design for the stage is unique and is Dr. Straud's own. The base of the proscenium is seven feet above the constructed level of the stage proper, enabling the actors to effect rapid and effective entrances and exits from the centre of the stage by simply walking down the front below the level of the spectators, the principle being that it is easier to build up than to lower sections of the stage. We work from nine to twelve — after one hour on comparative architecture — sitting, by the way, in coats and mufflers, trying to keep warm by gazing at pictures of Sicilian monasteries, as the State cannot afford to heat the lecture halls. Two of us in Straud's class are working on individual problems, my own "stunt" being Shaw's "Androcles" — not only the stage settings, but complete scale drawings, floor plans, and numerous studies for lighting and cast grouping.

Professor Straud is a most interesting man, technically very well equipped. Such a worker — he is putting on a production here just now, besides designing a reconstructed stage in one of the old theatres for Reinhardt's use next season. It is as you know the scandal of the year that Reinhardt was not able to get a proper theatre, since all the playhouses were engaged months ahead of time. There has been a great todo about it, but nevertheless we are grateful for what he is able to do in the ballroom of the Royal Palace. The limitations of this stage are great, and all Vienna is looking forward to the productions he will be able to make next year on a large scale through Dr. Straud's new theatre plans. To return to Straud's theories, he believes in considering the actor's place and function in the set above that of the decorator. He insists on making everything else subservient to the three basic factors in the drama: the author, the actor, and the auditor. He affirms that the modern scenic artist should not try to make himself a fourth element, nor consider his picture above the play or the actor. Eventually the stage director must be the artistic and technical director in one, and in sole command of the ensemble. This point of view, from a man who is recognized as a leader in the new theatre movement throughout Europe, is significant. Personally he is very attractive — he is fundamentally the "mummer", and not alone either painter or architect, though both of these he is. He is always looking for the dramatic values of a production — that is his big idea. . . .

During the entr'acte, at one of Reinhardt's plays, we came upon Reinhardt with Hofmannsthal and Anton Hanak the sculptor, devouring Wieners and beer at the counter. I was presented to Hanak, who invited me to visit his studio the next day. A most stimulating experience, the two hours spent at that studio. Hanak is un-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

doubtedly one of the greatest sculptors in Europe today, a really powerful creative master. He belongs, or rather is one of the survivors of, the famous Secessionist group of Vienna organized about twenty-five years ago by Klimt at the time when all Europe was feeling the influence of the impressionist movement in Paris. Hanak's work in a general way reminds me of Rodin, and personally he is in many ways similar to the Frenchman, though still extremely individualistic in character. In much of his work I was conscious of a tremendous suppressed force endeavoring to break free — the same feeling that O'Neill must have thought of in writing his "Hairy Ape". It's the desire to "tink"! Hanak himself, a man of no cultivation, has a very receptive mind, but he expresses himself in his sculpture and in his writing by sheer native force unpolished by any sophisticated education. At the same time, he is much the artist, his work never lacks subtlety.

We knocked at the door of Hanak's studio, a large structure in the Park which used to serve as a Royal sculpture gallery, but which the government has turned over to its greatest artists for their workrooms — none of them can now afford anything large enough. We waited a long time before the door slowly opened a little way, revealing the most comic picture of a little red bearded man that I have ever seen. In his overlarge sagging working clothes, his stumpy powerful body surmounted by a great dome of a head bristling with stiff red hair everywhere except on the broad high forehead bulging out over a comparatively small face, he looked for all the world like a prehistoric man. But his manner was delightful! Such cordiality — wrinkles and bunches of smiles greeting us as he urged us into his studio. We came as respectful and admiring students sitting at the feet of "Herr Professor", but Hanak

An impression of Anton Hanak by Joe Mielziner

would have none of that. He insisted on dismissing his model for the morning and giving himself entirely to us as though we were distinguished visitors. Three huge rooms were alive with fascinating giant figures in plaster, in marble, and in bronze — all of heroic size. He talked incessantly about the problems on which he was working and about his student days. His manner was most dramatic: waving his long arms about, he accompanied every incident and thought with pantomime. We were simply spellbound when he got out stacks of his drawings, very fine things, real sculptor's drawings. The medium rather puzzled me and I asked him in the best German I could muster how they were done. His answer was typical. He ran for paper, water, and a copying pencil, and then, splashing water on the paper in the form of a figure, quickly drew in the outline, allowing the water to take up the ink from

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the pencil. The result was most interesting.

Next he opened a large closet and showed us piles of manuscripts which he has been writing for the last twenty years. Each one of these sheets of writing is a work of art in itself, resembling some mediæval manuscript, beautifully spaced and full of character. I admired them so much that to my wonder and delight Hanak picked out two handsome pages and presented one to each of us. He was just like a charming child, so pleased at our youthful admiration and enthusiasm that, had we remained an hour longer, I am sure we should have come away with a great marble figure. These writings he said were for the most part biographical, many pages just jottings down of his thoughts — such were the sheets he gave to us, signed with his decorative signature and date. A number of the pages which he ran through with us were blotted, or else the script had become a little unruly. At sight of them he would grin and say, "Ah, that was that day at the café — a little Rhein wine." Finally, when he pulled out one page where the characteristic writing ran in overlapping lines up the side of the page, he smacked his lips: "I remember, that was a good bottle of Bordeaux, *aber sehr gut.*"

JOE MIELZINER

German Short Stories and Other New Books

THE publication of several collections of stories brings before the foreign reader's mind with renewed force the fundamental difference between the English or American and the German short story. Very few Germans write a short story around some telling incident, some momentary crisis in a life, still less around a mere episode. As their word for the short story, *Novelle*, really implies, they regard the short story as a little novel. They pack a whole life history into thirty pages or so, and waste characters and incidents enough for a full length romance upon these compact studies. When — as sometimes Theodor Heinrich Mayer in his latest volume "Sport" — they do immortalize an incident, they pack it with much psychological material, preliminary to, during, and subsequent to the main happening. Mayer sins in this respect; he has really a talent and is in danger of burying it under a hayrick of words.

Walter von Molo's "Die Liebes-Symphonie", a collection of four short stories, his earliest work, now published in its final revised state, is in truth a group of condensed novels. Purity of style, strong characterization, and a great gift for developing before the reader's eyes a complete environment, the entire circle of family and friends that surround the chief character, are the main feature of these pocket romances, which have that singularly self-contained absence of sentimentality which one notices in the younger German writers.

Grete von Urbanitzky in her "Masken der Liebe" gives us a strong book, distinctly feminine. She shows a woman's readiness to concentrate on the chief characters, a truly feminine preference for "strong, silent" heroes. Her short stories lean more toward the incident than is common, but her Germanic strain (she is an Austrian) reveals itself in her willingness to illuminate her crises by a panoramic view of the hero's previous life.

In contradistinction to these condensed novels, the Germans cultivate short sketches, tiny flashes of life,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

often brilliantly limned in. A master of these trifles, often encasing a weighty thought in a frame of sparkling words, is Victor Auburtin, who has collected a number of these sketches into a book under the happily chosen title "Ein Glas mit Goldfischen".

The thoughtful quality of the German short story is another point in which it differs from the usual English and American story. It is often built around some vexed question, some problem of social or sex relations. The fantastic story, brought to high perfection by Gustav Meyrink and Oskar Panizza, is another form in which various modern authors excel. Masters of the fantastic are A. M. Frey, with hair raising ghost stories, and Mynona, whose field is more the ironic and the grotesque. This pseudonym—reversed, the name discloses the German word for "Anonymous" — masks the identity of a solemn writer of philosophy, Professor Friedländer, and the knowledge of things philosophic is often used by the playful other self, Mynona, as a background or an accessory to his fantastic work. Mynona's best work is contained in "Der Schöpfer" and "Die Bank der Spötter", both published by Kurt Wolff. A. M. Frey's most famous work is a fantastic romance entitled "Suleiman der Unsichtbare", but his best short stories are contained in a volume under the title "Spuk des Alltags". This collection contains a story about a lonely old woman in a house full of cats which would have been worthy of Edgar Allan Poe.

Stefan Zweig, famous as poet and biographer, has also published a volume of short stories, "Amok" (Insel Verlag, Leipzig), which is said to be his finest work. With fine artistry he depicts ordinary men and women surrounded by their small daily affairs, who for one reason or another are suddenly stirred with great passions and experience their moment of destiny — quite a good formula for what a short story should be. Zweig shows strongly the influence of Dostoyevsky and Balzac, but not to the disadvantage of his own strong individuality.

Wilhelm von Scholtz, whose play "The Race with the Shadow" (Wettlauf mit dem Schatten) has carried his name beyond his country's frontiers, is receiving a good deal of attention, on the occasion of his fiftieth birthday. His work as essayist and storyteller occasions more comment than his dramatic work, and his latest volume "Zwischenreich", short stories touched with mysticism like all his work, and some with a historical background, is having very good reviews.

Anna Kappstein, the wife of the literary historian Theodor Kappstein, has published a book which would be likely to win hold in America were it available in English. It is entitled "Ehe-Kunst" (The Art of Marriage). Frau Kappstein, a woman of keen intellect, fine sensibilities, and deep feeling, takes hold of the marriage problem with both hands, and avoiding cynicism, sentimentality, and glittering epigram, writes of engagements, home building, children, parents-in-law, childless couples, comradeship, hospitality, and many other aspects of this ever interesting subject. Most of her truths would be equally applicable in any modern home. Only the solemn warnings against allowing the numerous family, from parents to remotest aunts and cousins, to interfere with the young couple, are peculiar to Germany, where the *Sippenwirtschaft*, the clan spirit, the family gregariousness, is much more in evidence than in other lands.

H. L. Mencken's "In Defense of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Women" has just been issued in a translation by Franz Blei, under the title "Verteidigung der Frauen", by Georg Müller, Munich. It is an exquisite looking little book, got up in old-fashioned style as one of the "Books of the Abbey Thélème" in covers of poison green with quaint, monkish designs in black and white on the back and a "floral device" on the tops of the pages. Blei's translation seems to have preserved to an astonishing degree the flashing wit of the original. When H. L. Mencken visited Germany last summer he found that through the occasional articles which have appeared in translation in various magazines, he already had a faithful following. It will certainly be much increased through the issue of this book. To Germans, who have largely acquired their ideas of modern American philosophy from the writings of Prentice Mulford and other "New Thoughters", Mencken's daringly original and ironic wit comes as something of a revelation.

The famous physiognomic collections of Lavater which have been in private hands for over a hundred years, inaccessible to the general public, are now to be published in facsimile by the Amalthea Verlag in Vienna. The first two portfolios will be "Lavater and His Family" and "Goethe and His Circle".

"Alice in Wonderland" is to be presented to German childhood for the first time. What will they make of this delightful and so thoroughly English little person? It will be interesting to see if her charm is too local to carry across the Channel. The translation is said to be a remarkably perfect achievement. The proceeds from the sale of "Alice" are to be devoted to the "German Children's Fund".

Two splendid new art books are the volume on Franz Hals by Dr. Valentiner, published by the Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, with 300 illustrations, a most exhaustive work, and "Rubens" published by Verlag Oldenbourg, Munich. "Rubens", a beautiful book, with 131 illustrations, is not a complete biography of the great Flemish master but a series of brilliant studies which would have formed the basis of a larger work, had not the talented young art critic, Rudolf Oldenbourg, died before bringing it to completion. These studies, revealing various aspects of Rubens's life and work, have perhaps retained more freshness than would have characterized a tome conscientiously enlarged and filed. Wilhelm von Bode, the famous art expert, has edited the book.

René Schickele, the brilliant Strassburger essayist and playwright, has published a new volume of reflections "Wir Wollen Nicht Sterben" (Kurt Wolff), which is greeted as one of the books of the past year, both as to style and content. It is impressionistic, philosophic, and optimistic. An interesting new collection of letters is "Schumann Briefe", the romance of Schumann and Clara Wieck, published by the Wuppertaler Druckerei, Elberfeld.

A biography of Lily Braun, the famous Socialist novelist, has just appeared as an introduction to her collected works, which are to be issued in five volumes. Her husband, Dr. Heinrich Braun, is seeing the collected edition through the press. A certain piquancy lies in the fact that the author of the biography, Julie Vogelstein, is now the wife of Dr. Braun. Nevertheless the book is hailed as a perfect example of what a biography should be. Julie Vogelstein was a close friend of the family for years.

ETHEL TALBOT SCHEFFAUER

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE GOSSIP SHOP

WHO is the Gossip Shop? This is a question which naturally doesn't interest us at all. We know. But, said a young lady, to us, *if* you are the Gossip Shop, how can you write of this affair or that affair? We were present, you weren't. It can't be you. Of course we aren't the Gossip Shop. It is only *one* of the many facets of the Gossip's personality for which we use the pronoun "I", so sedulously banned from these columns. The Gossip, himself, is as tentacled as an octopus, and as far reaching. Now that we are being published in London, we have achieved a London personality. We are "Brother Savage", and we often nose into old bookshops not far from the British museum, or take a stroll down Piccadilly. One lady writing from the state of Kansas says, "I have guessed that the Gossip Shop is Lloyd Morris." Now *that* is amusing, for though we have lunched with Mr. Morris, and though he is a charming gentleman, and though he has just written an excellent monograph on Edwin Arlington Robinson, he has nothing whatsoever to do with THE BOOKMAN, and moreover, he looks nothing like us. He has not violent hair, nor does he talk constantly about Vermont, nor does he wear checked vests and grey spats (no more do we). At any rate, this speculation as to the identity of the Gossip Shop must cease, we feel. It is only another exhibition of that curiosity which, as we progress from middle to old age, we find more and more to characterize the public.

Grant Overton, now that his "Island of the Innocent" has been published, is working on another book, the substance and form of which he (knowing our incurable gossiping tendencies) refuses to divulge to us. Instead he tells us that he lunched with Ted Robinson not long ago. Ted, it seems, after his summer experiment at bookselling in artistic Provincetown, has taken over the book page of the Cleveland "Plain Dealer", and is to publish this season two books, one verse, to follow "Piping and Panning", another a story, to follow "Enter Jerry". Stephen Vincent Benét and his delightful wife have taken an apartment away over near the river on the East Side, and it is a most homelike place! There he is writing numerous short stories, planning a new novel, and too seldom amusing himself with a piece of his fine poetry. John Macrae of Dutton's, whose reminiscences of W. H. Hudson are fascinating (we wish that he would write them for us), tells us that Edward Lucas White, whose "Andivius Hedulio" and "El Supremo" are among the first of recent historical novels, is soon to have another volume of sketches as well as a new novel. We have done our best to find Garet Garrett this month, after reading his powerful "The Driver"; but to no avail. We have the promise of an introduction soon, however. You'd like "The Driver". It's what might almost be called a historical business novel. Sherwood Anderson, who is living in New York City now, tells us that he's writing a humorous novel. Well, this may not be so humorous as it sounds. He is as gentle a person as ever, though he says that he feels

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he must be protected from the Gossip. We were hurt by that, for we aim never to attack in these pages, least of all Mr. Anderson.

Clara Wilson, of Alameda, California, would have won the book prize for the best review from readers this month; but her review was too long. We wish that more people would send in such reviews, and that they would remember the 250 word limit. Why not some from our English readers? If mail delays them we shall simply add them to the contest for the following month. The prize for the April review will be Anne Parish's extraordinary first novel, "A Pocket Full of Poses".

Especially timely, in view of the publication of the volume "I Can Remember Robert Louis Stevenson", is this note which comes to us from Adelaide V. Wainright of Manasquan, New Jersey:

When in April, 1888, we received a letter from Mr. Will H. Low, artist and afterward author of "A Chronicle of Friendships", asking that his friend Robert Louis Stevenson might come to us for the month of May, it carried with it nothing more than the fact that it was for a friend or friends of one whose requests we were always glad to comply with. Artists and authors were not uncommon visitors in the old home whose roof had sheltered many such, and Robert Louis Stevenson had not fully "come into his own" in the hearts of the multitude who afterward through his wonderful pen came to know and love him.

I can only give a glimpse here and there of these four weeks — the last weeks spent in the east previous to his voyage on the Pacific where, seeking health among its beautiful islands, he found a measure of joy and his last resting place. At the time he was with us, his wife was in San Francisco arranging for the trip, and the family coming to us consisted of Stevenson, his mother, his stepson, Lloyd Osbourne, and Valentine. Valentine came as a companion to Mrs. Stevenson and was entirely one of the family.

The month of May in that year was particularly one of fogs and damp weather, but there were many bright days, and on such Stevenson, wrapped in his long dark cloak, would take lengthy walks, usually beside the river or across the bridge to Point Pleasant, sometimes with Osbourne sailing in his little hired boat.

On damp days he would remain in the house — more often in his room — doing much of his writing in bed. At such times he would have around him a Mexican blanket having a hole cut in the centre to slip over his head, thus protected from any drafts which might otherwise be felt. A little grate fire in the corner of the room gave added cheer. While here he was writing "The Master of Ballantrae". I do not know whether he either began or finished it here, but he was working on it.

I recall the bright Sunday when Saint-Gaudens, the sculptor, came down from New York to model the hands of Stevenson for his medallion. The little son of Saint-Gaudens came with his father and Mr. Stevenson was delighted with him. Mr. and Mrs. Low were frequent visitors. For many years there had been a deep friendship between these two men, Low and Stevenson. Charles Scribner, at that time his New York publisher, also visited him and spent at least one night with him.

Numerous telegrams passed between Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson relative to plans for the anticipated trip. I recall one sent to Mrs. Stevenson, because it cost eight dollars. While with us Stevenson made his will, Mr. Wainright being one of the witnesses. I imagine though there were later ones; certainly Mr. Wainright was not called to Samoa.

Several times efforts were made to interview the writer, but he was always unwilling to see anyone for that purpose. I distinctly remember *one* who was very anxious to get such an interview, but Stevenson would not consent.

His mother was very proud of the rising fame of her son. She showed me a large scrapbook in which she kept clippings, and not only did she have the many favorable and gracious words of praise so freely given to him, but also the few unfavorable ones.

I have often seen the love and admiration felt for him evidenced by the many strangers coming to look at the house and the room where he spent these weeks. One rather amusing instance I remember well. Years later we saw a carriage stop (in this day it would have been an automobile) and three or four people get out. They began gazing at the end of the house by the roadside, their eyes fixed on the upper window, apparently fascinated and talking most earnestly. We felt rather curious and someone went out and spoke to them. They said

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

they were looking at the window of the room that Robert Louis Stevenson had occupied. Their mistake was explained to them and we gladly showed them the room. One of the men seemed immensely grateful for he said, "I have come four hundred miles to see this room."

Stevenson had a most pleasing personality, and was usually the life of the little circle. On the morning he left for San Francisco via New York he wrote the following lines in my little daughter's album:

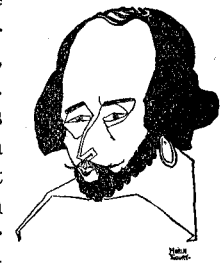
"Little girls should take and tackle their pianos
Early in the morning as I like to hear you do,
Stick to early rising, and the various other virtues
Looking out for early folks will come and stick to you."

He left our home on May 28, 1888. Just one month later, on June 28 on the schooner yacht "Casco", he passed through the Golden Gate from the Bay of San Francisco into the Pacific Ocean, and so to his island home. He learned to love it and its people, who loved him much in return. Among them he found his last resting place on the summit of Vaco Mountain, and these words written by himself are engraved on the stone that marks the spot:

"Under the wide and starry sky
Dig the grave and let me lie
Glad did I live and gladly die
And I lay me down with a will.

Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill."

This has been a month of dinners and of much speech making. We prefer the summer, when the music of babbling brooks takes the place of those who read their own poems or sing their own songs. The dinner of the Authors' League Fellowship was far more entertaining than it often is. Here we met for the first time the charming Mrs. Ray Long, and listened to jokes from William Johnston, saw Jesse Lynch Williams talking to Margaret Mower (who not only acts well but wears an orange gown superbly in his "Why Not?"). Harvey O'Higgins was glimpsed in the distance, and we were again conscious of the fact that his "From the Life" has always seemed to us one of the best books of American short stories. So many, many authors were there that we were staggered before them — and so few we knew. Arthur Train we saw, and Gelett Burgess, the indefatigable toastmaster, or perhaps ringmaster were better. There performed such stunt horses as Glenn Hunter, Eugene Lockhart, Will Rogers; and a burlesque Shakespeare interested us, though it happened after we left — we were interested, however, in the thought. Shakespeare has been so much with us this year that we interviewed him in spirit the other day. He looked at us rather mournfully, and shook his head. "The playwrights, actors, producers, scene designers — what is this they have done to me?" he demanded. "Well, only think how popular you are." "I know, I know," was his reply. "But I should so like to be able to recognize my own plays." In spite of the fact that the playwright calls it an "invention", and in spite of the fact that it twists the Shakespeare legend out of all semblance to supposed truth, we have seldom sat through such a perfect performance as Clemence Dane's "Will Shakespeare". To watch Haidee Wright as Queen Elizabeth is an evening's entertainment in itself. This and "Hamlet" are, so far, the only Shakespearian events of the year which we imagine the gentle Will himself would have enjoyed. We disagree violently with our dramatic critic concerning "The Merchant of Venice".



Shakespeare

What a number of new poetry magazines there are, to be sure. Now

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

comes along "Rhythmus", for which so far we do not care at all. However, we are prejudiced against new magazines of poetry. With "The Measure", "Poetry", and "Contemporary Verse" all, in their way, representing adequately certain viewpoints, we believe other efforts futile. However, perhaps some may say, the more poetry the better. We have always wondered why the Poetry Society of America did not adopt for its slogan, "Poetry for the Poet's Sake". We have not attended the Poetry Society this year. It had become merely a senseless wrangle the last time we were there, and a more useless performance we cannot imagine. However, since Dr. John Erskine has become president, perhaps it has changed. Still, Daniel Henderson sends us the following verse which seems to point to a continuation of imbecility:

ON CERTAIN CRITICS IN THE POETRY SOCIETY

Hunter and huntress, here they sit
With spears of satire, shafts of wit,
And barbs of learning, to impale
A sparrow or a nightingale!
What if some fledging songster's trust
Is shattered by their scintillant thrust?
What though the seasoned warblers, wary,
Shun this song hallowed sanctuary?
These care not — gloating on the birds
That flutter in their snare of words!

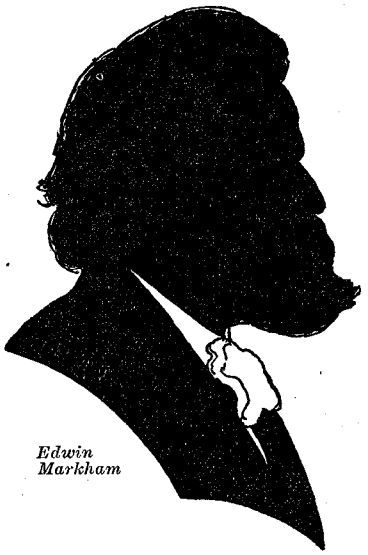
Speaking of poetry, in the December magazines we found "Runner" by Genevieve Taggard in "Voices", "Quarrel" by Elinor Wylie in "The Century", and "Judgment" by Hortense Flexner in "The New Republic". Feministic, this month, aren't we?

Everybody likes Hugh Walpole, and the folk of his native Liverpool still retain their affection for him despite the hard things he said about their city in the December issue of THE BOOKMAN. His latest American lecture tour is being a great success, but his own pleasure in it must have been saddened when the news came through of the death of Sydney Pawling. The bare announcement in the English newspapers (generally in the sports page, for Pawling was a fast bowler in his time, and until his death the treasurer of Middlesex County Cricket Club) conveys no idea of the loss sustained by the publishing world. America will recall his visit during the autumn of 1921 as head of the firm of fine traditions established in 1890 by William Heinemann. Since Heinemann's death two and a half years ago Pawling had gained the affection of many of the younger writers by his kindly, paternal interest in them and his practical encouragement of their work. We count ourself as not the least grateful of these, and we treasure many happy hours at Pawling's own hearthside away west in the neighborhood of Earl's Court. His great ambition, as he confided to us once, was to own a monthly fiction magazine wherein each story would encounter one test only — the artistic test, names and reputations being of no significance whatsoever. A worthy ambition, never, alas, to be attained. In business as well as in friendship we remained closely associated until his last illness, but our clearest memory is of a farewell gathering to Mr. Doubleday, prior to his return to New York twelve months ago, at which Pawling figured as host. Hugh Walpole will recall that bright evening, for he, Pawling, and ourself became deeply engaged in a certain momentous conversation. And if Walpole reads this paragraph he will know at once exactly who has written it.

The Bookfellows last year — on April 23, to be exact — gave Edwin

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Markham, the poet, a party for his seventieth birthday. From far and near poets, authors, and citizens came to pay tribute to the man who wrote



Edwin Markham

How will it be with kingdoms and with kings —
With those who shapt him to the thing he is —
When this dumb Terror shall reply to God,
After the silence of the centuries?

At that time the Bookfellows asked various American writers to devise quatrains in praise of Mr. Markham, The result has been a collected book of these with the silhouette portrait by Earl H. Reed printed herewith. It is called "A Wreath for Edwin Markham" and we have picked from its leaves three which we liked best.

Time, always writing, sees no trace
Of all he writes on Markham's face.
On Markham's face he writes in vain:
Apollo rubs it out again.
— *Edwin Arlington Robinson*

With this great truth a hit you've scored; —
The hoe is mightier than the sword.
And this again you've made us know; —
The man is mightier than the hoe.
— *George Steele Seymour*

Here is the love I love to send,
With all my heart I greet you thus,
Dear friend who has the world for friend,
Your birthday is your gift to us.
— *Zona Gale*

The opening night of the Moscow Art Theatre assembled a unique audience which drew on every sort of group where there was culture or fashion or love of beauty. The Ned Zieglers were there and must hardly have refrained from comparing the production, spectacularly, to the Metropolitan's own superb "Boris Godunov". Clare Eames leaned forward to chat with the Dana Gibsons, and farther on were the Edward Robinsons, she with her stately and towering white coiffure of the eighteenth century, in contrast to the sleek and perfect dark Renaissance head of Nita Naldi in a box on the right. The round Balieff bounced about back of the orchestra for a delectable quarter of an hour before going on to his own Russian show, and Kenneth MacKenna came in late, having fluttered through his butterfly part. Nazimova's gamine face peering through her lorgnette picked out Kurt Schindler and Otto Kahn and Kreisler. Hearst supported one side of the aisle and Ochs the other. It took combined tact and considerable time for a distinguished dramatic critic on an important daily paper, assisted by Mr. Gest himself, to lure one obstinate gentleman from a wrong orchestra seat upstairs into a proffered box. It was, in fact, just as Gilbert Emery confided in a loud voice to Mrs. Havemeyer, "Oh, delightful! Everybody here you know. Everybody you'd like to know, and everybody you've stopped knowing." The production itself was colorful, but could not be compared in fineness with Gorky's "The Lower Depths" which

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was given the second week. Here we saw what seemed to us the perfection of character acting. This symphony of human character built up before us was perhaps even more obviously astonishing because of the fact that not understanding the words made it possible to observe the countless and one details of each performance. Or rather, one would have to return again and again to accomplish that. Who was there that night, we do not care. All of us stood to cheer and to applaud. What an extraordinary thing Stanislavsky has done in not only recreating life before us but piercing it with bitter and arresting interpretation, an actual penetration of the soul. Few plays depend so on direction as this one, and here one can see, if it was not possible in "Tsar Fyodor Ivanovitch", the greatness of this Russian theatrical genius.

Grant Richards, the English publisher, informs us that twenty thousand copies of A. E. Housman's "Last Poems" had been issued by the end of the year in England alone. This is remarkable. But every line of Housman's is dear to his admirers, and they will doubtless welcome the information that Professor A. W. Pollard's "Choral Odes from the Greek Dramatists", published a long time ago, contains three admirable translations from Housman's pen. They were written when he resided in London, a neighbor of his brother, Laurence Housman, with whom he has often been confused. He once held an appointment at the Patent Office, afterward becoming professor at London University, and then at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he is at present. A. E. Housman's exceedingly modest nature is to be divined in his poetry, but it is nowhere better revealed than in his private correspondence. When the editor of the English "Voices", following a charming custom, dedicated an issue of the magazine to the author of "A Shropshire Lad" on behalf of the younger writers, Housman responded with a letter in which he wrote, "I am naturally flattered by the handsome compliment you and your contributors have paid me, and I am pleased and grateful." The tone of these words can best be appreciated if the response to a similar dedication be quoted from the letter of a more prolific author than Housman: "You have done well in coupling with my name my novel rather than any of my other works. I would have made the same choice myself." We quote the private correspondence of a living writer with diffidence, however, for H. G. Wells has just given a frank opinion about the practice (on a postcard), in reply to a request for permission to publish certain of his own letters. "No," he wrote. "I think this growing practice of giving publicity to extracts from private letters in the publication of books must stop. It will kill frank and easy correspondence between authors." We imagine that most authors will agree (with certain qualifications) with Wells. If this printing of letters—and remarks—that were never meant for print continues, they will have to head their letters — like the communications of the Press Bureau in the war — "Not for Publication." Whether or not even that would have any effect is quite another matter.

Randolph Caldecott and Kate Greenaway were born in the same month of the same year — Kate Greenaway on March 17, Caldecott on March 22. They were great friends, and for many years it has been the custom in the New York Public Library to celebrate their birthdays with an exhibi-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion of their picture books and special story hours. This year, on discovering that March 5 will be the seventieth birthday of Howard Pyle, it is planned to open the spring exhibition of the best illustrated children's books on that date. The suggestion of extending this idea to the bookshops was made at the annual dinner of the Philadelphia Booksellers' Association last March and received with enthusiasm. We understand a number of bookshops are making special displays of Caldecott, Greenaway, and Pyle. Marian Cutter in New York has a most attractive one.

Alexander Woollcott going to the play is a sight that only the most sophisticated New Yorkers know, and that no real New Yorker should miss. He is a great admirer of Dickens, as was witnessed by his book, "Mr. Dickens Goes to the Play", and anyone who sees this caricature of him will realize at once that he has made himself after the pattern of a Dickens character. He walks like a Dickens character. He talks like a Dickens character. He dresses like a Dickens character. Occasionally, he even writes like Mr. Dickens. What a relief he must be to those persons who wish to reconstruct the world according to the nineteenth century. What an anomaly he is brisking down Broadway! Speaking of Broadway, we have been catching up on plays recently. We have seen "R. U. R." at last and think it a thoroughly exciting adventure play — not much more. We liked "Passions for Men" far, far better than our critic; and we think, in spite of Mr. Schildkraut's superb performance, that if any play should be censored, "The God of Vengeance" is that play. We heard W. A. Brady speak at St. Marks in the Bouwerie the other afternoon, and a fine speech it was, from a man who has lived in the theatre and loved it for years. The public will not take what is best in

Alexander Woollcott

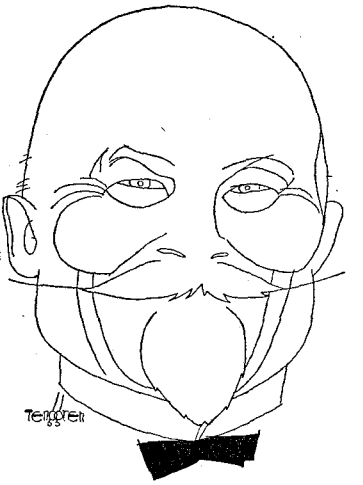
the drama, he maintains. The American audience is essentially optimistic; it wants hokum — and hokum is the bread and butter of the theatre, says Mr. Brady, or, if you prefer, the corn beef and cabbage! We saw, too, the moving picture "Salome", with Nazimova. It is beautiful, if not inspiring. And we were present at the first showing of the "Teleview", a contrivance by which motion pictures are given depth and the figures move in magnificent perspective. This experiment points to interesting developments, even though the first picture was a trifle dull.

A year ago, sitting in St. John Ervine's cosy flat at Hendon, six miles north of London, we listened after tea to his reading aloud of two plays upon which he had for some time been busily working. As Ervine's wife, who until her marriage was a member of the famous Abbey Theatre

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Company in Dublin, was away in the country, we comprised his entire audience. The first play he read was a one act piece which soon afterward, it will be remembered, was included in the Grand Guignol series at the Little Theatre, London. Then came "The Ship", to which he had put the finishing touch that same morning. The fortunes of the dour and skilful drama lately presented to Liverpool audiences had, therefore, a particular concern for us. So successful was the production, indeed, that we shall not be surprised to hear of its early performance in America. Ervine has, we understand, signed a contract with an American publisher to write a book on the drama. He is already busy on what promises to be a lively as well as an authoritative contribution to his own leading subject. He tells us also that he contemplates writing a sequel to his novel "Changing Winds".

When we caught our first glimpse the other day of M. Coué, we looked about for his twin; for surely here was one of the Cheeryble brothers escaped from the pages of "Nicholas Nickleby". But it became apparent at once that M. Coué is neither mythical nor mysterious. No one is more surprised than he, he declared, at some of the "cures" which enthusiastic followers have ascribed to him. We found especially engaging the little Frenchman's joviality, and his readiness to join in a laugh on himself (as when the members of the Alliance Française of New York who had gathered to hear him shouted with glee at a momentary slip of memory). We are quite sure that he will even find amusing the fact that THE BOOKMAN'S artist has seen fit to delete the soft white hair that crowns that remarkable head. Not long after we saw Will Rogers do an imitation of M. Coué, so now the two are confused in our mind. This, however, we do re-



M. Coué

call, that it was Mr. Rogers and not M. Coué who, as he sat down, remarked casually, "I am the Margot Asquith of America."

Nobility, we have found, is as inspiring — yes, *inspiring* — as a symphony, or, say, a play like "Liliom". It's rare, too, that's obvious. We were, recently, sent down to Gramercy Park for an interview with Honoré Willsie. Little did we know how she was to fill us with her beauty. A tall woman with black hair parted in the middle and the bluest eyes we've ever seen smiling down at us — we're ridiculously short — strode toward us from her desk with a cheery "Hello!" Mrs. Willsie told us why she had given up the editing of "The Delineator" — too much responsibility — millions of women depending on her magazine — too little time for writing. And when she told us her schedule for the day, which is a science, we understood. Two lovely children, ten

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and seven (we know because we peeked at their pictures) use up part of the day, and household accounts, and dinners (Mrs. Willsie has given up luncheon engagements), and a tremendous mail, to say nothing of the novels that are ever coming from her pen. The typescript of her next one was lying on the window seat. It is to be a serial in "Everybody's", "The Exile of the Lariat". "It is a western story, of course, and" — laughing — "I shall hate it a week after it is finished!". There is yet another novel germinating and we were given a hint as to its subject — but that's a secret. We're very curious to know what different authors think is the significant contemporary novel: Mrs. Willsie thinks it's "Babbitt". She likes young writers and asked after Scott Fitzgerald, "whose pen is so facile and who is so clever". Born in the middle west, she had much to tell us of the amazing culture of the middle western women; she knows it to be a wider and deeper thing than the culture she finds in the east. At the age of nineteen the author of "Judith of the Godless Valley" sold her first story, and it was S. S. McClure who told her that she had "the gift of gab" but knew nothing of technique. Thereupon she set out with great diligence to revamp and cut and wrestle with her stories. She has learned to write through experience. She told us tales of a winter spent in the Rockies for "material" and of her faithful old Negro nurse who rode horseback over the mountain trails and waded through snowdrifts up to her waist. While she went away to put on her hat and coat, we looked at the beautiful photographic studies of Indians on the walls and at a lovely oil portrait of Mrs. Willsie herself, a subject indeed for any artist.

We asked George H. Doran how he found London, or rather, the authors' and publishers' London, in December and January. Lively, he answered; and went on to tell us of the many authors and publishers he had met, so many that we cannot attempt to recall the roll. But there was Arnold Bennett, with whom Mr. Doran spent much of his time, and there were Aldous Huxley, Frank Swinnerton, Stephen McKenna, Norman Davey, Ruby Ayres, Sidney Dark, E. T. Raymond, Lord Riddell, and various other authors in and about town. J. C. Squire was there, Rebecca West was away on a visit but returned at the last moment, Somerset Maugham was still in Siam, and Robert Hichens wrote from Switzerland, where he spends so much of his time. Mr. Bennett promised to have a new novel ready for publication in the fall. It is a thing of large dimensions — perhaps it will be as long as "Clayhanger" and "The Old Wives' Tale". Huxley is working on a novel, and there will be one by Swinnerton next autumn. Norman Davey is whipping into shape the novel to follow "Guinea Girl". Rebecca West may come to the United States as early as next September. By the time this is printed, Hilaire Belloc will be lecturing in the United States (his first engagement was in Washington, D. C., February 16). He handed Mr. Doran a new volume of essays. Ruby Ayres, the astonishingly productive author of extremely popular fiction, told of her new book — or was it several? We forget; but she has at least one novel on the spring lists. The author of "The Kingfisher", Phyllis Bottome, is having her volume of two long short stories, "The Victim and The Worm", published in a few weeks, to be followed by another novel. Mr. Doran

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

told us how delighted he was to secure for immediate publication "The Farington Diary", edited by James Greig. This is the book of which our contemporary, "The Atlantic", has been printing small bits. Farington, R. A., was one of those men who knew everybody — Napoleon, Josephine, Wellington, Nelson, Boswell, Wordsworth, and the rest. His book, of which only the first volume can be brought out right now, will naturally take its place with the legacies of Pepys and Evelyn. A remarkable number of serious books of great value and interest are on the English lists, and we gathered that Mr. Doran had taken a dozen or two for immediate and future publication. He brought back the good news that Dr. James Moffatt, author of "A New Translation of the New Testament", expects to have ready for next fall his corresponding translation of the Old Testament, which has been a labor of several years. English publishing conditions are quite sound, Mr. Doran said. "There seems to be a fine, strong undercurrent of activity throughout the business," he told us. Particularly delighted was he by the fact that English publication of THE BOOKMAN has been undertaken by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton, publishers of "The Bookman" (London), who will give to THE AMERICAN BOOKMAN (as it will be called) the same effort and promotion that have made their own magazine so successful.

What a complexity of playwrights we have encountered this month. Our fashion editor (she of the gowns) has returned from Bermuda where she went for a rest, and is now resting from Bermuda (the passage back was oh, so stormy). For this reason she could not advise us on the quality of the gowns at the opera evening given by Zoe Akins not long ago. Miss Akins, herself, as Pagliacci, Jobyna Howland as Thaïs, Ina Claire as Manon, Jeanne Eagels as Carmen, Ruth Hale as The Girl of the Golden West, Madame Matzenauer as herself, so Doris Keane, so Ethel Barrymore, so Margaret Mower. We, poor shy flower, fell into a corner and stayed there while Avery Hopwood told us indefinitely of projected new plays. We have run across George Middleton, just returned from Europe after too long a sojourn, and A. E. Thomas, just returned from Boston and from watching rehearsals of his pirate play which Walter Hampden will soon do; Arthur Goodrich, pleased that "So This Is London", the surest hit of the year here, will be on London boards soon; and Jesse Lynch Williams with Samuel Merwin on the stage of the Forty-eighth Street Theatre discussing the whys and wherefores of "Why Not?" Of course, we are particularly jubilant this month because of Philip Barry. Philip was a classmate of ours at college, a fraternity brother, if we remember correctly, one of the editors of that staid old undergraduate publication, "The Yale Literary Magazine". Now his Harvard prize play, "You and I", is to be produced here, and we are both proud and envious. (Hear! Hear! Princeton and Harvard men who say that we backslap for Yale. Why shouldn't we? We will say, however, that the new volume of poetry which has appeared under the title "Eight Harvard Poets" is an excellent performance. We should like to know more Harvard men.) Mary Roberts Rinehart is deeply engrossed in a new play. Her son Alan has come to New York City to engage in the new magazine venture "Time", and so it goes.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED